

BETWEEN TWO WARS



NOTICE

On Page 89, the third paragraph should read:

The jury found the men guilty of murder and robbery. They were sentenced to die. Many people then became angry. Among them were famous writers and lawyers. They said that Sacco and Vanzetti had not gotten a fair trial and that the judge, Webster Thayer, was prejudiced against the two men. They also said that Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent and were being punished because they were foreigners and anarchists.

BETWEEN TWO WARS

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by

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PART 1

WORLD WAR I



The leaders of Europe knew that a war was coming. They had known it for a long time. But no one thought that the war would last four years, from 1914 to 1918.

World War I took more than eight million lives and cost 337 *billion* dollars. The peace treaty that ended the war did not end the hate that caused it. Many people say that the treaty was too hard on Germany and that it helped cause World War II, which was even bloodier.

What were the causes of World War I?

An arms race. In 1914 Europe was divided into two armed camps. Britain, France, and Russia were in one camp. In the other were Germany and Austria-Hungary. Both sides, expecting trouble, had been building up their armies and navies. By 1914 Europe was a powder keg — all it needed was a spark to make it explode. The spark came when an assassin fired his pistol and shot to death the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary. That was on June 28, 1914.

Super-patriotism. Strong national pride — a sort of super-patriotism — led some people of Europe to look down on, and hate, others. In the summer of 1914, hate was running high. There was a war fever in Europe. In London crowds shouted, "Down with the Germans!" In Paris people shouted, "To Berlin! To Berlin! Long live war!" In Berlin crowds roared, "War! War!"

The desire for colonies. Britain and France had many colonies in Africa and Asia. Germany had few colonies and wanted more. It wanted "a place in the sun." Britain and France were afraid that Germany's desire for more colonies would interfere with their own empires.

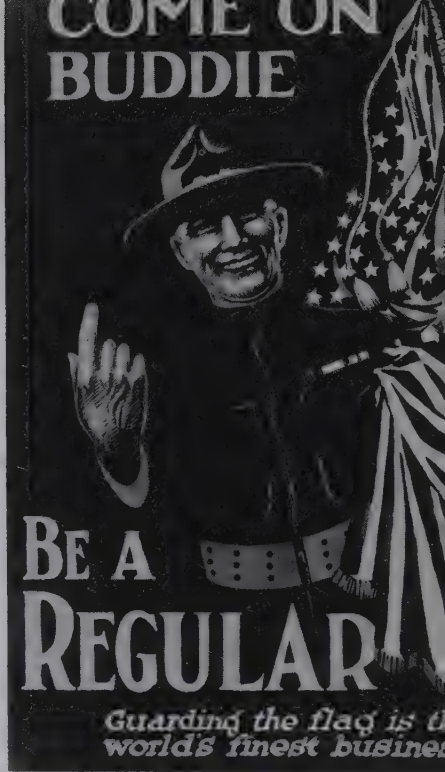
No way to keep peace. In 1914 there was no organization like the United Nations where countries could talk to each other in a time of crisis. If a crisis came up — and all Europe was expecting one — it seemed as if war would be the only way to settle it.



"Who keeps us out of war?" was one of President Wilson's campaign slogans in 1916 (above). He won re-election, but in 1917 the U.S. entered World War I. Allied leaders in Paris (below) turned down many of Wilson's peace plans after Germany's defeat. Wilson came home disappointed (upper right), but tried hard to get the U.S. to join the League of Nations. The strain broke his health, and in the end he needed Mrs. Wilson's help just to sign papers.







When the U.S. declared war, many young men didn't wait to be drafted into the armed forces. With pretty girls and posters to help them make up their minds, they "joined up" on their own. Some signed up to be flyers. Airplanes were new to the wartime scene, but quickly became important.





Airplanes were not the only new weapon used in World War I. The French and British put armor on automobiles at first, but by 1916 "tanks" were taking the place of armored cars. In other ways the war was old-fashioned. The Germans used horses to drag their cannons to the front.



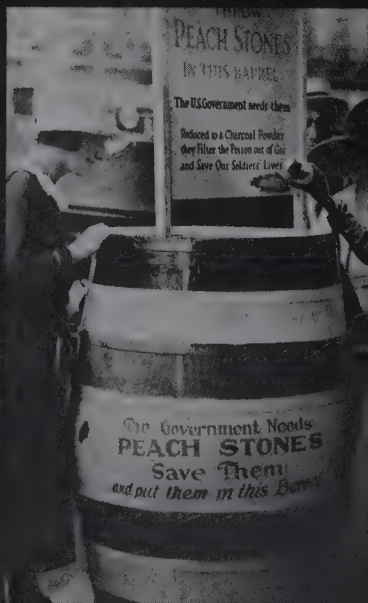


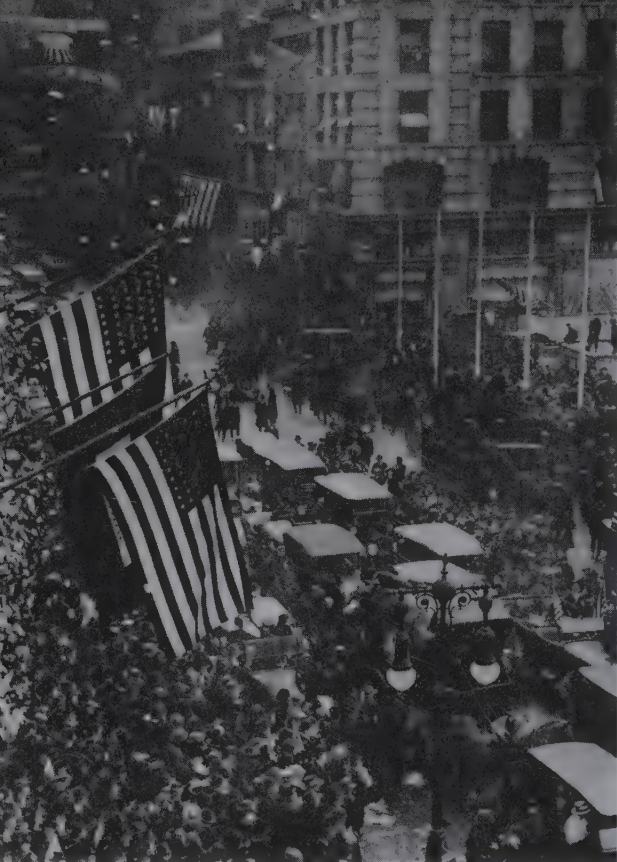
For men on the front lines, there was little but misery. Soldiers on both sides spent months in muddy trenches, dodging shells and fighting off tank charges. Millions were killed, millions horribly wounded. The war took a high toll among work animals, too.





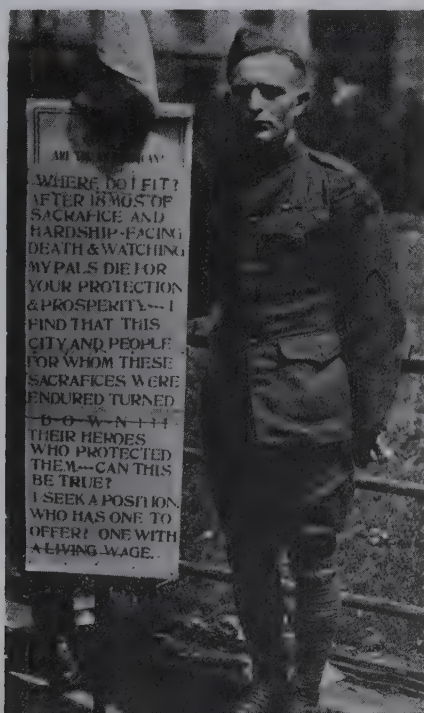
Soldiers had to watch out for many kinds of attack. Besides rifle and machine-gun bullets, there were shells fired by giant cannons and bombs dropped by airplanes. Perhaps worst of all was an invisible killer, poison gas. Americans on the home front (below, right) saved peach pits to be ground up into a powder for gas mask filters. Some of the wounded were cared for in special hospital trains.

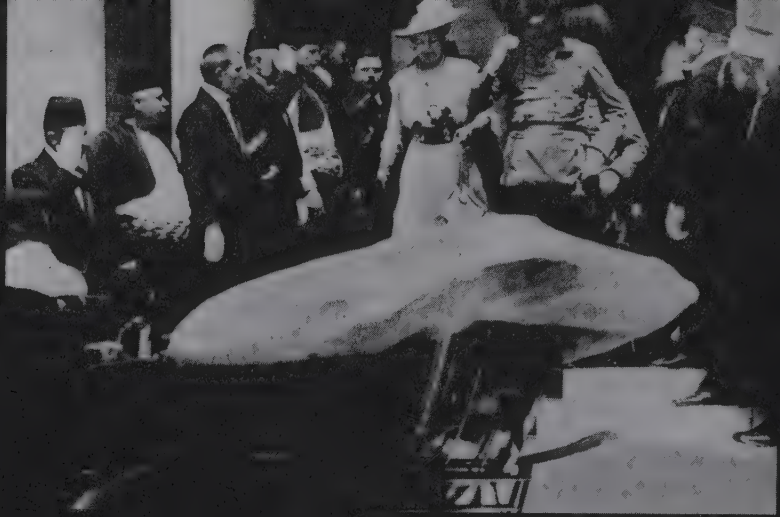




Joyous crowds took to the streets of New York (left) and London (right) at the end of the war in 1918. But in the huge cemeteries in which millions of young men lay buried, there was a terrible silence. Some soldiers who came home (lower right) couldn't find jobs that paid enough to live on, despite a big boom in U.S. business.







Chapter 1

MURDER AT SARAJEVO

Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was on a good-will tour. He and his wife, Sophie, were visiting the town of Sarajevo. The year was 1914. On the morning of June 28, they took a drive through the streets. It was a holiday, and many flags were flying. People lined the streets to watch the Archduke pass. No one knew that seven young men in the crowds were waiting to kill him.

Who were they? They were Serbians. Serbia was a small country. It is now part of Yugoslavia. But in those days many Serbian people were ruled by Austria-Hungary. This made some patriotic Serbians hate the Austro-Hungarians because they wanted all Serbians to live together under one flag. So the seven young Serbians plotted to kill the Archduke — for Serbia. They spread out along the streets of Sarajevo. They were armed with pistols and bombs. The streets were not well guarded.

The Archduke's car passed the first Serbian plotter. The Serbian lost his nerve and did nothing. But the second plotter threw his bomb at the Archduke. The Archduke raised his arm and knocked the bomb into the street, where it exploded and wounded about a dozen people. Quickly the Archduke's car sped past three more of the plotters, who did nothing.

Finally the car stopped at the City Hall. The Archduke was very angry. He shouted at the mayor. "I came here for a visit and I get bombs. Mr. Mayor, what do you say?" The mayor did not understand what had happened. He made a speech welcoming the Archduke. Then the Archduke calmed down and smiled.

The Archduke then said he wanted to visit the

hospital. He wanted to see the people who had been wounded by the bomb explosion. He begged his wife not to go with him. It was too dangerous. But she said, "No, I must go with you." Along the way, their car passed the sixth plotter. He did not make a move.

Then the Archduke's driver made a mistake. He turned the car into the wrong street. He stopped to turn around. Five feet away was the seventh Serbian plotter. He drew his gun and fired twice. One bullet hit the Archduke in the neck. The other hit Sophie in the stomach.

The car sped back. Blood began pouring from the Archduke's mouth. Sophie cried, "For heaven's sake, what has happened to you?" Then she fell forward. The Archduke became frightened. He cried, "Sophie dear, don't die! Stay alive for our children!" Then he, too, fell forward. Both were soon dead.

This was the spark that set off World War I. Austria-Hungary wanted revenge. On July 28, 1914, it declared war on Serbia. Russia had already said it would help Serbia if war broke out. Germany had said it would help Austria-Hungary. Armies began to move, and it was too late to stop. When France backed Russia, German armies marched into Belgium to attack France. Then Britain joined in with the French and Russians.

By August 4, all the great nations of Europe were at war except Italy. Britain, France, and Russia were on one side. (Italy joined them later.) Germany and Austria-Hungary were on the other. Both sides thought they would win a quick, easy victory. They were wrong.

What did the United States do when World War I broke out? Most Americans favored the Allies — Britain, France, and Russia. But few people wanted to get into the war. President Woodrow Wilson said the United States must stay neutral — not take sides. Most Americans agreed with him.

But in 1915 a German submarine sank the *Lusitania*, killing many Americans. Then it began to look as if America might have to get into the war.

Chapter 2

THE U-BOAT AND THE LUSITANIA

The date: May 7, 1915.

The place: the coast of Ireland.

What was happening: Europe was at war.

The captain of a German U-boat (submarine) was worried. He had good reason to be worried, too. In those days a submarine was like a dangerous toy. Any warship could sink it easily. The submarine was slow, and it had little armor. A single hit from even a small gun could sink it. Any large ship could ram it and crush it like an egg.

The captain was worried, and he was tired. His men were tired, too. For two months they had been sailing off the English coast. They had sunk a few British ships, but they were only small ones. Now they wanted to go home.

Then, on May 7, the captain saw a large ship in his periscope. He could not make out its name. But he was sure it was British. He got ready to fire a torpedo.

What ship was this? It was the British liner, *Lusitania*. It was the largest and fastest passenger ship in the world. Inside, it was like a palace.

The *Lusitania* had sailed from New York on May 1. That morning Germany had printed a warning in American newspapers, saying that the German navy would sink all British ships, even passenger ships. It warned Americans not to travel on British ships. Despite the warning, 179 Americans sailed on the *Lusitania*. Altogether, more than 1,900 people were on the ship. Also, just as the Germans had thought, there were war supplies on board. The *Lusitania*, against the law for passenger ships, carried 4,000 cases of bullets.

The captain of the *Lusitania* was given special orders. He was told not to take the usual route to England. He was also told to steer the ship in a zigzag

direction. If he saw an enemy submarine, he was to ram it. But the captain did not want to scare his passengers. So he took the usual route and did not zigzag. The skies were sunny and the sea was smooth. Everyone was having a good time.

On May 7, about lunch time, the *Lusitania* reached the coast of Ireland. So did the German submarine, U-20.

The German captain gave the *Lusitania* no warning. (International law said he was supposed to.) He ordered the torpedoman to fire. There was a great explosion. The *Lusitania* began to sink.

Ten minutes later the liner went under. Nearly 1,200 people went down with the *Lusitania*. Many were women and children. More than 100 were Americans.

The submarine captain went home to Germany. There he was given a medal. But in the United States, people were boiling mad. They called the sinking "murder." Some wanted the U.S. to declare war on Germany at once.

President Woodrow Wilson did not want the U.S. to enter the war. He said, "There is such a thing as a man being too proud to fight." But he was angry over the loss of American lives. He sent very strong letters to the German government. It almost seemed that the United States would go to war.

Now the German government was worried. It did not want the United States to enter the war. Germany answered Wilson's letter with a promise not to sink any more passenger ships without warning.

In 1916 Woodrow Wilson was again elected President. Many people voted for him because "he kept us out of war." But in 1917 Germany broke its promise. U-boats again began to sink passenger ships without warning. Now there was little hope that the U.S. could keep out of the war. The German Kaiser (emperor) said, "If Wilson wants war, then let him have it." Soon after, the United States did declare war on Germany.



Chapter 3

THE U.S. DECLARES WAR

It was April 2, 1917. President Woodrow Wilson looked pale and sad. He had just asked Congress to declare war on Germany. But just the year before Wilson had been elected on his promise to keep America out of war. Now the man who had “kept us out of war” felt that the U.S. had to go to war.

What made Wilson change his mind about entering World War I?

After the *Lusitania* was sunk, Germany made a

promise: its submarines would not attack passenger ships without warning.

But now the Germans thought that the U.S. would soon get into the war on the Allied side. They believed that submarines could win the war before the U.S. could get any troops to France to fight with the Allies. So, early in 1917, the Kaiser gave his submarine captains new orders. They were to sink without warning *all* ships going to Britain — even American ships.

President Wilson was shocked. On February 3, he ordered the German ambassador to go home. He warned Germany that if American ships were sunk, he would take further steps.

That same month, the United States got hold of a secret German message. It was meant for the German ambassador in Mexico. The message said that Germany hoped the United States would not enter the war. *But if it did*, Germany wanted Mexico to make war on the United States. Germany offered the Mexicans Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona in return — that is, if Germany won the war.

The message made President Wilson even more angry. And the submarine news was getting worse all the time. Germany was sinking 23 Allied ships a week! At that rate, it would win the war. Then, on March 16, two American ships were sunk by German submarines. All over the United States, angry citizens held parades. They carried banners saying, “Kill the Kaiser!” and “On to Berlin!”

Finally, on April 2, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war. He said, “The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be founded on . . . liberty.” The American people did not see it as a war for democracy — yet. They were too angry. They wanted to settle the score with the Germans for sinking American ships, offering Mexico U.S. land, and overrunning neutral Belgium in 1914.

Anti-German feeling ran high for other reasons, too. Americans were tied to Britain by language, and they

remembered that France had helped America during the Revolutionary War. Many Americans also had business ties with Britain and France, and they did not want to see the Germans win. Also, British propaganda made it look as if the Germans were very cruel fighters. News reports said that German soldiers were killing helpless women and children in Belgium and France. Americans were shocked by these reports. By 1917 most Americans were ready to go to war with Germany.

Congress cheered President Wilson's speech. So did the crowds in Washington's streets. But Wilson was an unhappy man. He said to his secretary, "My message of today was a message of death for our young men. How strange it seems to cheer that."

On April 6, Congress voted to declare war on Germany. But the United States was not ready for war. It had less than 200,000 men in its Army, and very few of them were ready for action. Besides, the Army's guns were too old to be used in Europe.

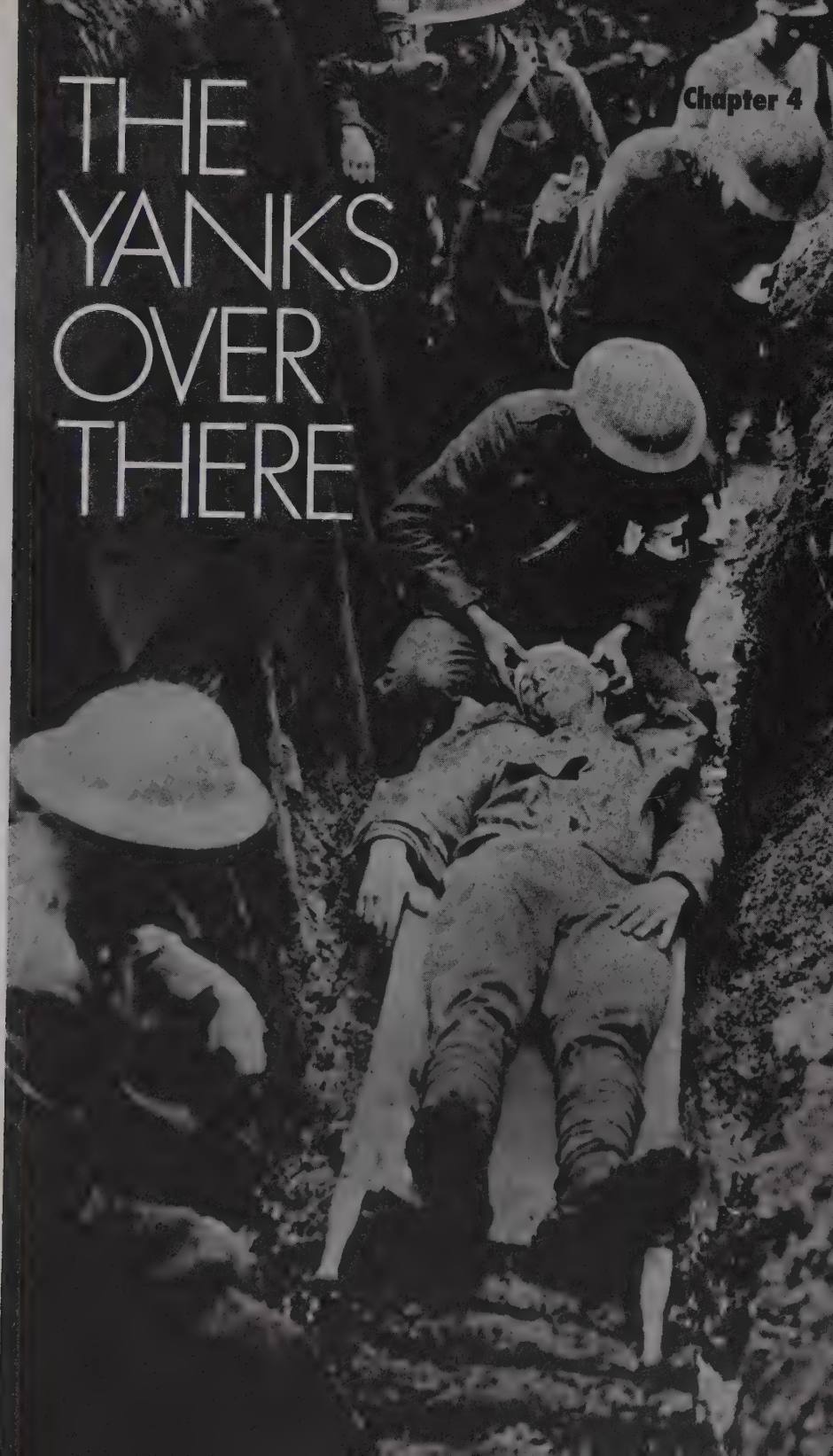
Early in May, General John J. Pershing — "Black Jack" Pershing, he was called — was put in command of the Army. A few days later, Congress passed a draft act. This law said that any man between 21 and 31 could be drafted into the armed forces.

On June 5, more than nine million men signed up for the draft. There were no riots against the draft, as some people expected. The day was more like a holiday than anything else. Everywhere people sang, "Johnny Get Your Gun."

Then the United States began building Army camps. Factories began to work day and night to turn out guns, ammunition, and war supplies of all kinds. America was sure it would win the war. Its Navy destroyers were already sinking German submarines. Early in June, General Pershing and about 160 officers and men reached France. By the end of the year, 1917, more than half a million men would be in uniform. The Yanks were coming! And American power would help bring victory to the Allies in Europe.

THE YANKS OVER THERE

Chapter 4



The year: 1918.

The place: the battlefields of France.

Millions of young soldiers had died fighting since 1914. But neither side could win. Their armies were dug into trenches to escape the murderous machine-gun fire. These trenches stretched for hundreds of miles. Often they were filled with water and rats. The torn and muddy ground between them was called "No Man's Land." The front lines never changed more than a few miles either way, for months at a time.

Then, in 1917, the United States joined the Allies. The Germans knew they had to win before a large American Army faced them. In March 1918 and again in May, the Germans attacked. These attacks carried the Germans to less than 40 miles from Paris. The war seemed lost. The Allies thought Paris would fall.

Finally the French commander called on the Americans for help. General John J. Pershing rushed 30,000 men to the front. French soldiers, falling back to Paris, shouted, "The war is finished!" The Americans shouted back, "It is *not* finished!"

At Chateau-Thierry, a French officer told the American troops to retreat. "Retreat, nothing!" a Marine officer answered. "We just got here!" The American soldiers — called "Yanks" or *doughboys* — attacked instead. Their attack stopped the Germans cold. Then the doughboys drove the Germans out of Belleau Wood. Their daring and bravery gave the Allies new heart. A French leader visited them. "I have come to see the brave Americans who saved Paris," he said.

Now it was the Allies' turn to attack. The Americans were ordered to clear the Germans out of the Argonne Forest. This was a tough job. The Germans had machine-gun nests everywhere.

The attack into the forest began on September 16, 1918. The shooting sounded like the end of the world. On the fourth day, 700 doughboys from New York's 77th Division were completely surrounded by the Germans. These men became known as the Lost Battalion. The doughboys dug in, forming a rough circle. German rifle and machine-gun bullets tore into the dirt. Cries of "Surrender, Americans!" came from the woods. The American major in charge sent a message to his men: "Our job is to hold this position at all costs."

At night the men of the Lost Battalion were pounded by mortar shells. The cries of the wounded were terrible. First-aid bandages were soon used up. Then bandages were taken from the dead.

In the morning, the American major sent a message by carrier pigeon asking for help. He prayed the message would get through. About the same time, the Germans sent a captured American soldier through the lines with a note. It asked the American major to surrender. The major refused. Then the Germans charged. Some of them used flame-throwers. The Lost Battalion fired rapidly and beat back the attack. The major again sent a message by pigeon asking for help. Cruel "help" came. American gunners made a mistake. Their cannons pounded the Lost Battalion instead of the Germans.

Later the Germans inched closer. They bombed the Americans with hand grenades. "Surrender!" they called. But the Americans would not give up.

After five days, the Lost Battalion was at last rescued. Only 194 of its 700 men walked out alive.

The American Army finally drove the Germans out of the Argonne Forest. The cost was very high. The Americans suffered more than 100,000 dead and wounded. But now the Germans were finished. They could not face the two million fresh American troops who were now in France, ready and waiting for action. In a few weeks, Germany would have to give up. At last, World War I would be over.



THE PEACE THAT FAILED

It was 11 o'clock in the morning, November 11, 1918. All over the battlefields of France the guns fell silent. World War I was over at last. Germany had agreed to an armistice, and both sides stopped fighting. The Kaiser had fled to Holland.

In Allied countries, people went wild with joy. At the front, soldiers laughed, cried, and cheered. American and German soldiers mixed. They traded cigarets for pistols and bayonets. Then the Yanks played children's games like blindman's buff. Later they got drunk.

Here in the United States, happy crowds poured into the streets. They waved flags and paraded while bands

played. They sang songs like "Over There" and "Pack Up Your Troubles." Soldiers in uniform were kissed and cheered. Never had the end of a war brought such happiness. More than eight million people had lost their lives — but finally it was over.

Now a peace treaty had to be made. Early in December, President Woodrow Wilson sailed for Paris. He was the first American President to leave the country while in office. In Europe crowds cheered him as a great hero. Girls threw flowers in his path. Banners said, "Hail the champion of the rights of man!"

But at the peace talks, Wilson ran into trouble. Wilson wanted a fair peace that would make a better world. He called it "peace without victory." He did not want to punish Germany too harshly. He did not want any German lands for the United States. Wilson told the world about his peace plans in a speech in January 1918. These peace plans quickly become known as the "Fourteen Points." They were so fair that even many Germans were for them.

But the other Allied leaders were against Wilson's peace plans. They wanted to blame Germany for all the death and damage of the war. They wanted to make Germany pay for it. They wanted to make Germany so weak it could never make war again. And they wanted to take some German land in Europe and all German colonies overseas. The French leader said, "Wilson annoys me with his Fourteen Points."

Wilson and the other Allied leaders had many arguments. "The peace talks make a noise like a riot in a parrot house," one reporter said.

One of Wilson's Fourteen Points was a plan for an organization to prevent future wars. It was to be called the League of Nations. In the League, nations would talk over their problems peacefully, instead of going to war. (It was much like the United Nations, set up after World War II.) Of all his plans for peace, Wilson fought hardest for the League. But to get the Allies to

accept the League, Wilson had to give up many of the other Points.

As a result, the peace treaty was very cruel to Germany. It said that Germany was to blame for the war. It took away part of Germany's land. Germany lost towns and cities, rich coal mines and factories and farm lands. Germany had to give the Allies coal, cattle, railroad cars, ships, and money. Germany also lost all of its colonies.

At first the Germans would not sign the treaty. They said it was a double cross, for it went against Wilson's Fourteen Points. If they had known that the peace treaty was going to be like this, they said, they would not have stopped fighting. But later they gave in. They had to, because they had already turned over all their warships and arms to the Allies.

The treaty caused much bitter feeling in Germany. Many people today believe the treaty (called the Versailles Treaty) helped cause World War II.

Wilson went home to the United States. He asked the Senate to vote for the treaty and make the United States a member of the League of Nations. (The League was part of the treaty.) "Dare we turn down the League and break the heart of the world?" he asked.

But many Senators were against the treaty because they were against the League of Nations. They believed the United States should not mix in Europe's business. Wilson decided to go to the American people for help. He rode around the country on a train, making speeches for the League. Everywhere large crowds cheered him.

But the strain of the fight weakened Wilson's health. One day he had a stroke while on the train. He was taken back to Washington, a very sick man. Soon after, the treaty was voted down in the U.S. Senate. Wilson's dream of a League of Nations, with the United States as a member, was gone. He died four years later, a broken man.



Chapter 6

THE WONDERFUL WOMEN

While the people of Europe fought each other, the American women were carrying on a war of their own.

It was a strange war. The women carried signs in front of the White House gates. One sign said, "President Wilson, what will you do to help women vote?" Another sign said, "Criminals, lunatics, idiots, and women can't vote!"

Who were these women demonstrators? They were *suffragettes* — women fighters for the right to vote. It was January 10, 1917, just a few months before the United States entered World War I. At that time, women had full voting rights in only a few states. Some states let them vote only for President. And 19 states did not let women vote at all. Now the suffragettes were demanding full voting rights in *all* states. They wanted an amendment to the Constitution to give them that right.

Women had been fighting for the right to vote ever since 1848. The first leaders of the fight were Elizabeth Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone. It was a hard, uphill struggle. Many people were against them. "Women should stay home and take care of their children," they said. "Their place is in the kitchen." The liquor business battled the suffragettes for years because many suffragettes were against drinking. Other businessmen opposed them, too. They were afraid that women might want them to "baby" workers.

Now in 1917 the suffragettes were up in arms. Some of them decided to picket the White House. That was hardly ever done in those days — especially by women.

People said, "Wait till the rain and snow come. They'll soon get tired of it." But the women didn't get tired. They stood through the rain in raincoats and rubber hats. In the cold, they stood on warm bricks. Friends brought them hot coffee. One winter day, 1,000 pickets marched around the White House. One woman was 82 years old.

Mobs sometimes attacked the pickets. Then the police began to arrest the women, who were given 30 to 60 days in jail. The jail was filthy inside. The food was so bad, most of it had worms. The angry suffragettes sent the head jailer a spoonful of these worms.

But the picketing outside the White House went on as usual. One banner called the President "Kaiser Wilson." This started a riot. The police made more arrests. Now the women were treated very roughly in

jail. They went on a hunger strike to protest. The leader of the strike, Dr. Alice Paul, was fed by force.

Newspaper stories told about this bad treatment. All over the country, people became angry. Many came to Washington to help the suffragettes. Others gave money. Big meetings were held everywhere for the Woman's Party.

Finally, in December 1917, the women were let out of jail. Then President Wilson came out in favor of giving women the vote. It was a great victory.

There was still some hard fighting ahead. But in 1918 the House of Representatives passed the 19th Amendment. This amendment gave women the right to vote in all elections — local, state, and national. The next year, the Senate passed it. And, by August 1920, 36 state legislatures had voted for it. That made the amendment part of the Constitution. The great struggle — begun in 1848 — was now over. After 72 years, women had the right to vote.



PART 2

THE ROARING TWENTIES



Preface

A 10-YEAR SPREE

World War I was over. People wanted to forget it and have fun. During the 1920's they went on a spree. They called it "making whoopee." One writer called it "the time of wonderful nonsense."

What was it like back in the 1920's?

There was a law against making and selling liquor. It was called Prohibition. But people still found ways to drink. Some people made liquor at home. Sometimes they made gin by mixing flavoring and alcohol in their bathtubs. Or they went to illegal bars called "speakeasies" for a drink. They would knock on the speak-easy door and say, "Joe sent me." Then they would be let in.

Men got liquor from dealers called "bootleggers." They sold liquor that was made in illegal stills or was smuggled into the country from Cuba or Canada. Often it was very bad liquor. Sometimes it was poison. Bad liquor killed some people and made others blind. Women drank, too. They could vote now, and this made them feel "free."

Grownups weren't the only ones who wanted fun. Young people wanted it, too. Girls were called "flappers" and the boys who wore the latest fashions were "cake-eaters." Many of them were "wild," or so their parents said. They danced to the fast Charleston and the Black Bottom. Flappers wore short skirts and rolled their stockings down below the knees. They bobbed their hair (cut it short) and painted their lips into a bright red Cupid's bow.

Boys wore long sideburns. They slicked their hair down and parted it in the middle. Heavy raccoon coats and bell-bottom trousers were "in" fashions. So were "knickers" — wide, baggy pants that tucked in at the knees. Both boys and girls had to have a yellow oilskin slicker (raincoat) painted with funny sayings.

The 1920's was also a time of fast cars and wild rides. Cars, which had been high and square-shaped, became lower and racier. The real sporty car was the Stutz Bearcat. Others were the racy Marmon and the Mercer with the bucket seat.

Teenagers wanted a little "roadster" with a rumble seat in the rear. The rumble seat was *outside* the car, where the trunk usually is today. It was great fun — except when it rained. High school kids bought second-hand Model T Fords. They painted them bright colors and wrote on them "Oh you kid!," "23 Skidoo!," and "Joe sent me."

The automobile changed American life. One big change was that boys and girls could date in cars and get out of the house. Parents wondered what the younger generation was up to.

The 1920's was a time of many crazes. One of them was a contest to see which couple could dance the longest without stopping. Couples danced for days, hanging on to each other, half asleep. There were also "Bunion Derbies" — foot races across the U.S. for prizes. And some men tried to see how long they could sit on top of a flagpole. Alvin (Shipwreck) Kelly set the record. He sat on top of a flagpole in Baltimore for 23 days and seven hours.

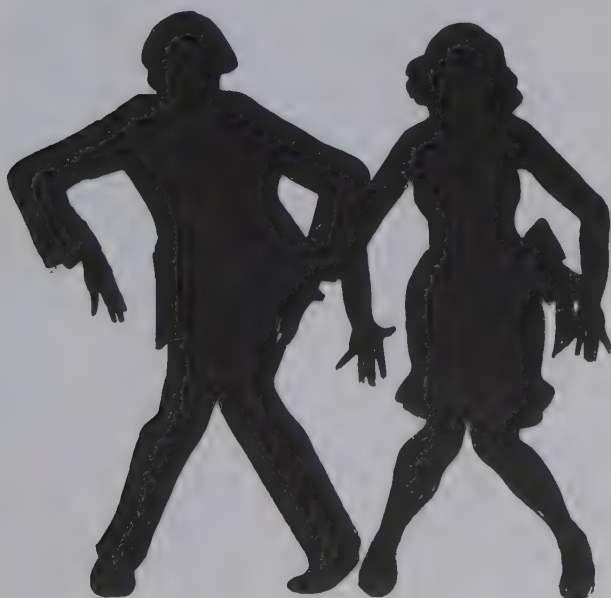
The 1920's was a time of great heroes, too. There were aviators like Charles A. Lindbergh and explorers like Admiral Richard E. Byrd. In sports there were heroes like Babe Ruth, swimmer Johnny Weissmuller, tennis champ "Big Bill" Tilden, Jack Dempsey, and "Red" Grange. And people "flipped" over movie stars like Rudolph Valentino, Douglas Fairbanks, Greta Garbo, and Clara Bow. Valentino died in 1926 at the

age of 31. Thousands of women screamed, fainted, and cried at his funeral.

The 1920's was also a great time for "big business." Many people gambled and made money on the stock market. Barbers, taxi drivers, and shoeshine boys put their money in stocks. A few of them got rich.

But not everyone did well. Wages were low. Many people had no jobs. And low food prices made things very hard on farmers. In some ways, the 1920's looked like a good time for black Americans. Places like Harlem in New York City and the South Side in Chicago had many black writers, artists, singers, and poets with famous names. Some people said that the "race problem" would be over in a few years. They said the day of the "New Negro" had come. But it turned out these people were wrong.

The end of the "Roaring Twenties" came in October 1929. That month the stock market crashed and thousands and thousands of people were "wiped out." Hard times set in. Many people began to look back on the 1920's as a childish and stupid time. But just as many other people said, "It was a great time to be alive."



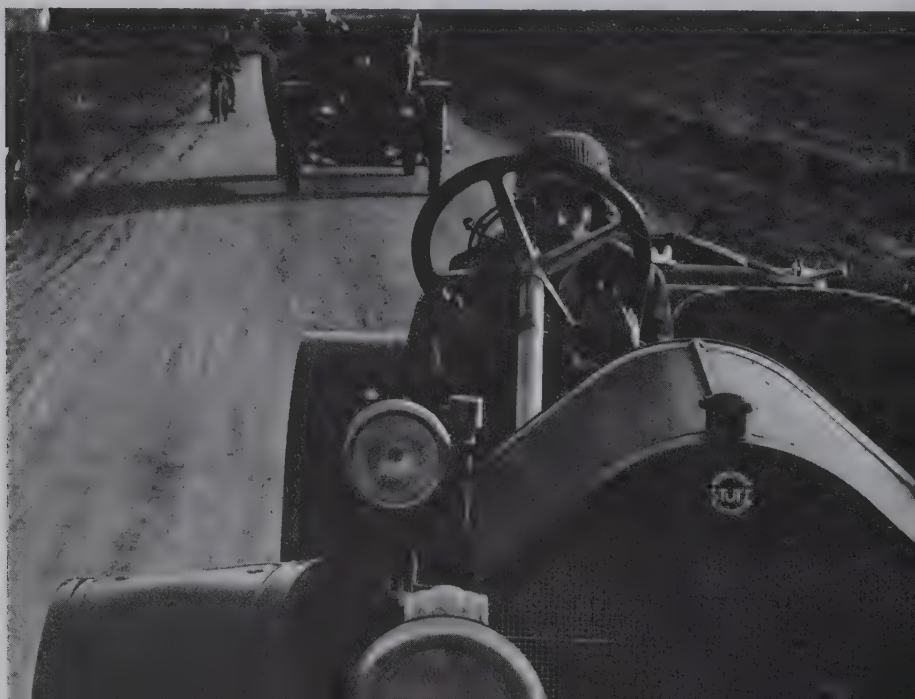


The "Roaring Twenties" was a time of crazy fads. One "in" thing to do was sit on top of a pole. "Shipwreck" Kelly (above) set a record of 23 days and seven hours without coming down. Daredevils did airplane stunts. Many young couples entered dancing contests (lower right). To win, they had to dance the greatest distance or last the longest without letting their knees touch the floor.





Many women wanted to be "free" in the twenties. Some dared to wear bathing suits that showed their legs — and were hauled away by the police. Others drove fancy cars like the Stutz Bearcat.

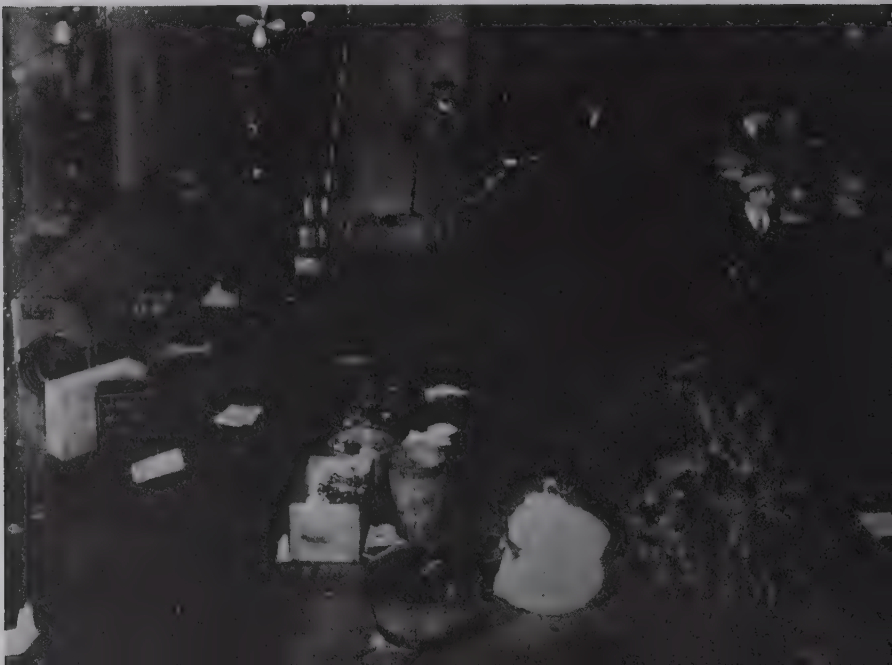


How "free" and "wild" could young women be? Some went so far as to dance the Charleston on the edge of a hotel roof. Others made fun of their elders. The girl in the cartoon is saying: "It's all right, Santa — you can come in. My parents still believe in you."



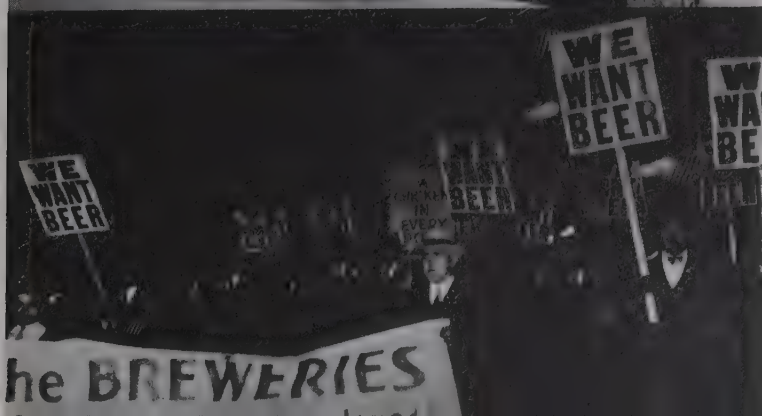


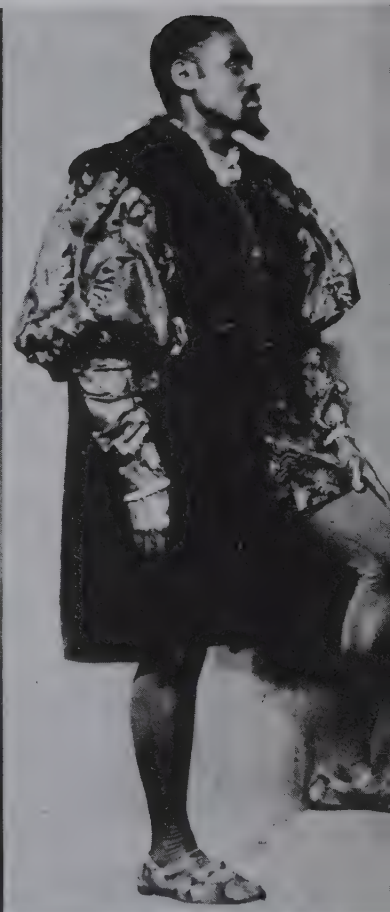
Not everybody stayed "dry" during Prohibition. They could go to a "speak-easy" for a drink. To get in, they might have to know a secret password. That helped make it fun to break the law. Inside, a speak-easy was often like a nightclub. It was dangerous, too. Customers could get arrested if federal agents "raided" the place.





Illegal liquor was often bad liquor. It came from home stills, from "runners" who smuggled it over the border, from barrels of "booze" made in mountain hideouts. Many people wanted Prohibition to end.





There was a burst of black talent in the arts in the 1920's. Stars like Ethel Waters and Paul Robeson (above) were winning fame on the stage. Richard Wright (opposite) and other black writers were telling what it was like to be a Negro American in books, plays, and poems. Harlem in New York City was the "capital" of black America at the time. For those who could afford it, like these "flappers" (upper right), Harlem was a wild and swinging place.





Chapter 7

THE WETS AND THE DRYS

On January 16, 1920, America went dry. It was against the law to buy or sell liquor. The new law, the 18th Amendment, was called Prohibition.

"A noble experiment," some people said. Others groaned.

Prohibition lasted 14 years. People argued about it all during that time. Those in favor of Prohibition were called "Drys." Those against it were called "Wets."

Prohibition probably did cut down on drinking and drunkenness. A joke of those times was, "Prohibition is a darn sight better than no liquor at all." True, the saloons were gone. But a new kind of bar called "a speak-easy" soon took their place.

Speak-easies were illegal bars. Sometimes they were

in dark alleys or side streets. Sometimes they were out in the country. But they were not really very secret. If you wanted to know where a speak-easy was, all you had to do was ask around.

Sometimes a speak-easy was "raided" by the police. Then everyone might be arrested. Or, the owner might "pay off" the raiders to let his place stay open. Often this was easy to do, because policemen and government agents got very low salaries. Payoffs and bribes made Prohibition hard to enforce. They also made speak-easies expensive places to go to for a drink.

Soon the speak-easy customers were mostly people with lots of money. Women drank, too, which was almost unheard of in saloon days. But in the speak-easy, heavy drinking was taken as a sign of a woman's "freedom." Working men and the poor complained about speak-easies — they could no longer get a cheap drink or a nickel beer.

Where did the liquor come from?

Some of it was homemade. "Bathtub gin" wasn't just a joke.

Illegal stills — small "factories" for making liquor — sprang up in basements, back yards, and barns. Some of the drink put up in these stills was very harmful. It could poison or kill a person if he drank too much.

Smugglers, called rumrunners, sneaked liquor into the country from Canada and the West Indies. They charged a high price for the risks they took. Some big-time smugglers made millions of dollars.

Soon the liquor business came under the control of gangsters and the "rackets." They began to carve out "territories" where only one gang sold all the liquor. Gangsters also owned most of the speak-easies. If one gang got in another's way, there would be trouble. The gangsters settled their troubles with submachine guns and bombs. "Gang wars" broke out in some cities. In Chicago more than 500 gang murders took place in the 1920's.

About half a million persons were arrested for

breaking the Prohibition laws during the 1920's. But most of these were common citizens caught in speak-easy raids, or small-time still operators. Big-time gangsters and criminal leaders were hardly ever touched, except by other gangsters.

The Wets pointed out all these things and said that Prohibition should be ended. "This is a law that is good for gangsters and bootleggers," they said. "We can't enforce a law that nobody wants."

The Drys pointed out the same things. But they said that stronger enforcement was the answer. If the law cracked down, they said, rumrunners wouldn't risk getting caught. The stills would go out of business. Then there would be no liquor for the gangsters to get mixed up in. And the speak-easies would close. It was as simple as that, so the Drys said.

The Drys also said that the farmers in the South and Midwest were still in favor of Prohibition. In fact, they said, three quarters of the country was already dry *before* the Prohibition amendment. The law was being broken mainly in the big cities of the North.

But the Drys were slowly losing ground. People were getting more and more turned off by the crime and lying that Prohibition encouraged.

In the election of 1932, the Democrats promised to repeal the Prohibition amendment and make the country wet again. One reason to get rid of Prohibition was that the country was in a depression that began in 1929. Almost 13 million men were out of work. People needed jobs. The liquor industry would make many jobs, the Democrats said. The government would put a tax on liquor. That would help to get money for relief. These arguments helped the Democrats win the election.

In February 1933, Congress passed the 21st Amendment (it took a new amendment to repeal the old amendment). By December, three fourths of the states had ratified (approved) the new amendment. Prohibition was dead.

AMERICA'S NEW TOY

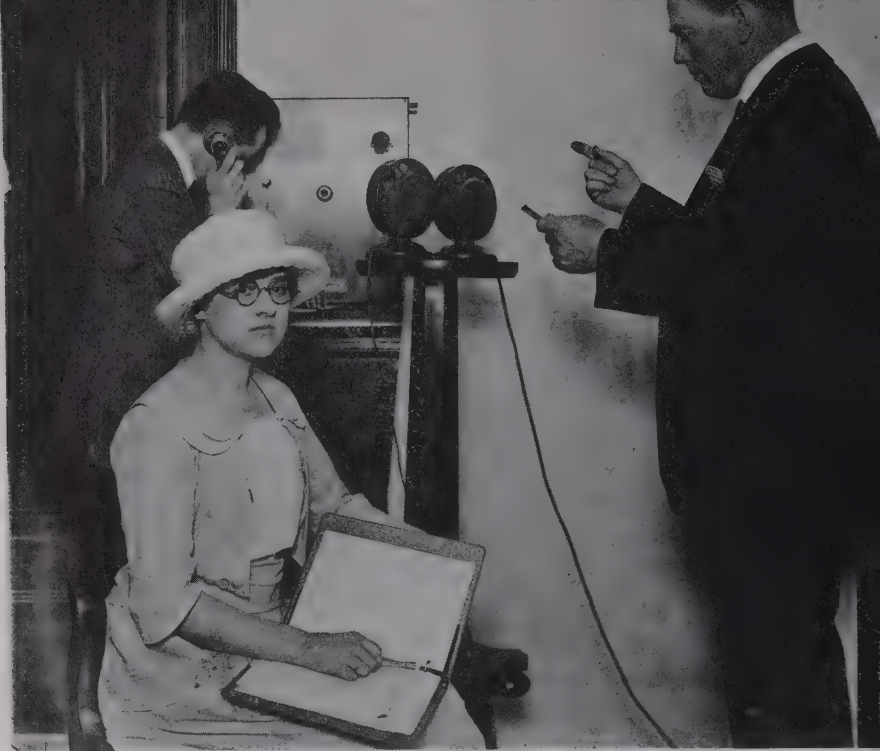
In 1922 Americans went mad over a wonderful new toy. It was called *radio*. That year everyone wanted to buy a set. The trouble was there weren't enough to go around. People visited the homes of the lucky ones who had radios. To hear these radios, they had to use earphones. Everybody took turns listening. They were amazed. Imagine hearing voices and music that came from the air!

How did it all begin? An Italian inventor, Marconi, made the first radio in 1895. But Marconi's radio could only send Morse code messages. It could not send voices or music. The code is made up of dots and dashes that stand for letters. It sounds a lot like static.

Five years later, the first human voice was sent by radio. Soon there were thousands of amateur radio operators. They were called "hams." They talked to each other by radio.

In 1920 Dr. Frank Conrad set up an amateur radio station above his garage. He lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Soon Dr. Conrad got a pleasant surprise. Many nearby "hams" were picking up his broadcasts. After a while, Dr. Conrad got tired of talking to these "hams." So he began playing records for them to give himself a rest. More and more people began listening to his broadcasts. They asked for baseball and football scores, too. Before long, a Pittsburgh store advertised radio sets that could pick up Dr. Conrad's broadcasts.

Dr. Conrad worked for the Westinghouse Company. The company thought that radio could mushroom into a big thing. It decided to build a station that would make regular radio broadcasts — as a business. The station, which was a little box-shaped room, was built

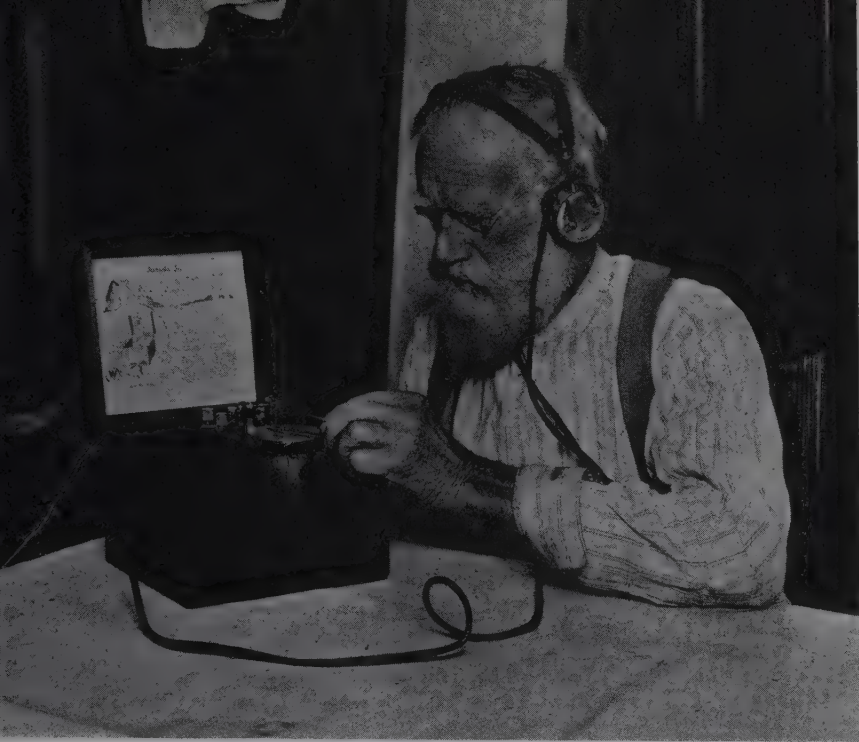


on the roof of the Westinghouse factory in East Pittsburgh. Its call letters were KDKA.

On the night of November 2, 1920, KDKA made the first regular radio broadcast in America. It broadcast the results of the election for President of the United States held that day. It announced that Warren G. Harding was the winner. About 500 people heard the broadcast. They were excited about hearing the news "from the sky." Big stories were printed about the broadcast in the newspapers. Before long, everyone *had* to have a radio.

KDKA began broadcasting music by a "live" band. It played from a tent set up on the roof. KDKA also broadcast church services and speeches. The next summer, another station was set up to broadcast a big boxing match between Jack Dempsey and Georges Carpentier of France.

The fight took place in Jersey City, New Jersey, on July 2, 1921. During the fight, the radio transmitter



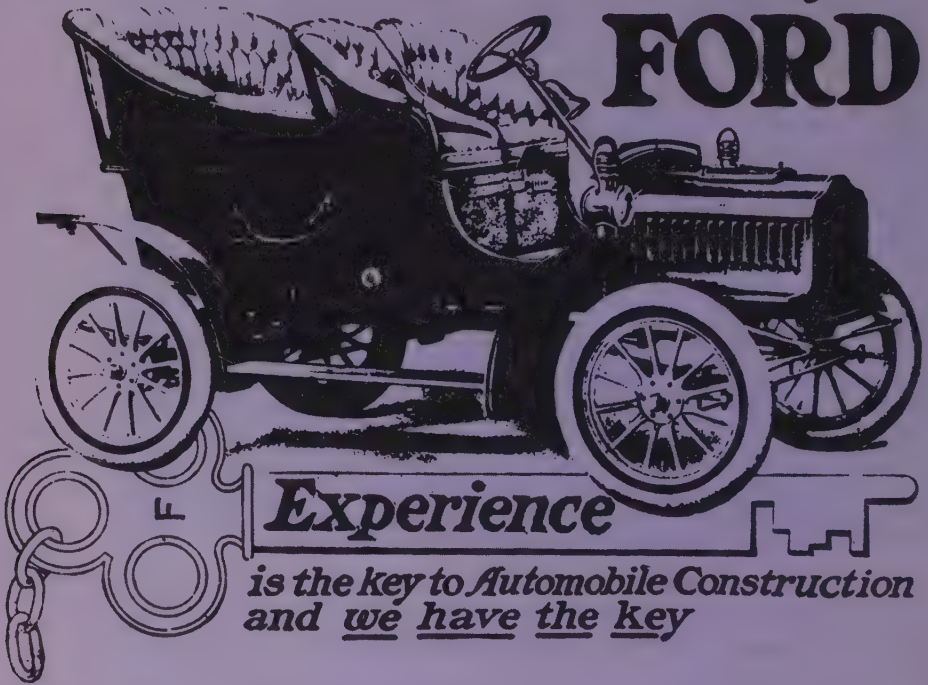
(sender) got hot and began to smoke. At the end of the fight, it melted completely. But 200,000 people heard the fight. Radio was a success. Soon stations began springing up everywhere.

In 1922 Ed Wynn, a famous comedian, was about to broadcast from a studio. But Wynn couldn't work without an audience. The announcer rounded up electricians, scrubwomen, and telephone operators. They became the first studio audience. Soon they were laughing at Wynn's jokes. And Wynn was able to go on with the show.'

Within a few years, radio became a big business. Businessmen formed companies called networks to broadcast shows coast-to-coast. Everyone listened to the news reports, popular singers, and comedy shows that were on every week. And everyone in the country heard the same news and entertainment at just about the same time. Today many stars of old-time radio can still be heard — and seen — on TV.

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THE TIN LIZZIE

It shook, rattled, banged, and groaned. It wasn't pretty, either. It looked like a black box sitting on high, skinny wheels. But it could do almost anything, and go anywhere. And it was cheap.

What was it? It was Henry Ford's Model T car — better known as the Tin Lizzie. It was the king of the road for nearly 20 years. And it changed the American way of life forever.

How did it come about? The earliest cars that were made took a long time to build. They were so expensive that only a very few people could afford them. Then a man named Henry Ford decided to go into the business. Henry Ford wanted to make a car that would be simple, tough, and cheap. He wanted everyone to be able to buy a car. So Ford came up with the Model T. The first ones came out in 1908.

It was quite a car. You had to crank it up to start it; there was no starter to turn the engine over. Once it got going, it jittered and clanked. But it ran — almost forever. The Tin Lizzie was light. It was only 100 inches long and could turn within a 12-foot circle. It was high enough off the ground to clear ruts, large stones, and even tree stumps. Because it was so light, it could pull itself out of sand and mud. (And that was important in those days of dirt roads.) It was strong and never tired. A farmer could use his Model T engine to pump water, saw wood, and run machinery.

Hardly anything could go wrong with it. If something did, you could fix it with a few simple tools. New parts were cheap. A new fender cost \$2.50. A new muffler was \$1.25. You could order a Model T part by part and put it together yourself. Many people did.

The Model T was plain. It came in one color — black — and had few gadgets. But stores sold hundreds of gadgets you could put on yourself.

People liked to make jokes about the Tin Lizzie. There was a story about an old lady who saved all her old tomato cans. She sent them to the Ford factory. Soon she got a letter from the factory. It said, "Your shipment arrived. We are making it up today and will send you one new Model T. We are also returning eight cans left over." Henry Ford loved such jokes. They helped advertise his car.

The Model T was gobbled up by the public. Eleven thousand Model T's were sold in 1908. They cost \$850 each. Other cars cost almost three times more. Then Ford started the assembly-line system of making cars. Each car was put together as it moved along an overhead chain. Each worker did one special job on the car. This made it possible to turn out cars much faster and cheaper. In 1924 Ford turned out 1,600,000 Model T's. That was more than half the new cars on the road. And you could buy one for less than \$300!

On June 4, 1924, the 10 millionth Model T rolled off the assembly line. There were big celebrations. The car was driven from New York to San Francisco. Brass bands welcomed the car in almost every town. And more than five million Model T's would still be made.

What finally happened to the Model T? It went out of style. The Model T body style never changed. By 1926 the flashy-looking Chevrolet outsold it. Then Ford shut down his factories. Next year he came out with a new car — the fancier Model A.

But the Model T had done its job. Because of it, new concrete roads were built everywhere in the U.S. It became easier for farmers to visit towns and cities. City people were able to drive out to the country. The Model T had put America on wheels.

Today there are still 300,000 Model T's being used in all parts of the world. "It's still the best car going," one Ford Company official said.



Chapter 10

NEGRO RENAISSANCE

"Oh, to be in Harlem again after two years away. The deep-dyed color, the thickness, the closeness of it. The noises of Harlem, the sugared laughter. The honey-talk on its streets. And all night long, ragtime and 'blues' playing somewhere . . . singing somewhere, dancing somewhere! . . ."

That is what Claude McKay wrote in his book, *Home to Harlem*. McKay's story is about Harlem in New York City. Harlem was the capital of black America during the early 1920's. And it still is today. The twenties was a "roaring" time, and Harlem was a swinging place.

"Ragtime and 'blues'" was the music of the twenties. It had started out as Dixieland in New Orleans. Then it came north and found a second home in Chicago during the war years.

From Chicago the blues went to Harlem. There they found a third home. Bessie Smith gained fame singing them. King Oliver, Jimmy Europe, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Jimmie Lunceford, and others made their names playing the blues. Many great musicians flocked to Harlem. Soon the whole nation was listening to this new sound. It combined sounds of Africa and America and of city and farm into a sweet blue music that told stories of love and deep sadness.

But there was more going on in Harlem than the sweet blue notes played and sung by the great artists of jazz. To Harlem came Negro writers from all over the country.

They wrote novels. They wrote short stories and autobiographies (stories of their own lives). They wrote plays, too. But most of all, they wrote poetry. Poems and more poems. They poured themselves into their work.

At first the work of the black writers was printed in *The Crisis*, the NAACP magazine. Then book publishers took notice. The publishers said, "These writers are important. They have something to say."

Soon writers such as Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay, and Countee Cullen became famous. Their success brought more black writers to Harlem. Never before and not again till the 1960's was so much written by black Americans or about them.

What did they write about? Themselves, mostly. They were telling it like it was — what it meant to be black. Some of their stories and poems were full of joy and hope. Some were very funny. Others were filled with sadness and anger. They wrote stories about the unfair treatment of black people. They protested against poverty. Sometimes they blasted whites.

There was a lot of pride and soul in these works. Pride in being black. Here's what Jake, the main character in *Home to Harlem*, sees as he takes a walk in the late afternoon:

The broad pavements . . . were colorful with promenaders. Brown babies in white carriages pushed by little black brothers wearing nice little sailor suits. All the various and varying pigmentations [colors] of the human race were assembled there: dim brown, clear brown, rich brown, chestnut, copper, yellow, near-white, mahogany, and gleaming anthracite. Charming brown matrons, proud yellow matrons, dark nursemaids. . . .

While all this was going on uptown in Harlem, changes were taking place in white New York. Negroes were appearing on the stage in important parts, not just black-face comedy parts. There were all-Negro plays and musicals.

Black actors were cheered and applauded for their work on the stage. Among them was Paul Robeson, a former All-America football player. He won fame for his starring performance in *Othello*, a play by William Shakespeare. He was also a concert singer. Another singer, Marian Anderson, was making a name for herself on the concert stage.

Negro writing. Negro music. Negro acting. Negro entertainers. Some called this time the *Negro Renaissance*. Renaissance is a French word that means rebirth. It usually refers to a time in history when Europe had a great rebirth of writing and art.

The Negro Renaissance was also a wild time. It was part of the age, the 1920's. Many people remember Harlem and the South Side of Chicago for the singers and the nightclubs and good times in the speak-easies.

But it wasn't all fun. Only a few black people read the poems, stories, and plays of the black writers and poets. Most could not afford to buy books. Some of the Harlem nightclubs were Jim Crow spots, for whites only. Blacks could play their jazz there. But they couldn't sit at the tables to hear it. They could act on the stage. But sometimes they couldn't get in to see the play.

That was one reason for the sadness and anger of black writers. They were telling it like it was.



Chapter 11

"LUCKY LINDY"

For hundreds of years, men dreamed of flying. Some thought they could fly by putting wings on their arms and feet. They jumped off high places and flapped these wings as hard as they could. It always ended up sadly.

By the 1800's, men were able to "fly" in balloons. Balloons were lighter than air. They could go up, but they needed the wind to move them along. Then came airships, or "blimps." These were lighter than air, too. In fact, they were cigar-shaped balloons with motors on their bellies. They were better than balloons, but they were slow.

An airplane is heavier than air. No one had ever been able to get one of these off the ground until the Wright brothers. At Kittyhawk, North Carolina, Wilbur and Orville Wright got their plane into the air four times on December 17, 1903.

The newspapers didn't say much about the Wright brothers' airplane. They didn't think it was very important. But a lot of daring young men heard about it anyway. And they got excited about flying. Soon they, too, were building airplanes and flying them. These daredevils risked their lives almost every day to set new records or win flying contests.

Then came World War I. Flying got a big boost from the war. The planes of those days were usually

made of wood, canvas, and wire. They were slow and had little power. Later models were faster and more powerful. Some even flew as fast as 100 miles an hour. They were safer, too. It wasn't long before some crazy people were talking about flying the Atlantic.

Fly the Atlantic Ocean? It didn't seem possible back in the 1920's. But in 1919 some people put up a prize of \$25,000 for the first nonstop flight between New York and Paris. Six men died trying to get that prize.

In May 1927, three more planes were ready for a crack at the prize. They were at Roosevelt Field, Long Island. Two of them were big, powerful planes. The third was a small, silver-colored plane called *The Spirit of St. Louis*. It had a single engine. There was no radio and no fancy instrument for finding position; only a compass.

The pilot of this plane was a 25-year-old airmail flyer named Charles A. Lindbergh. Lindbergh was tall, slim, and boyish-looking. Reporters called him "Lindy." He meant to make the trip across the Atlantic alone. (The other two planes carried more than one man.)

On the morning of May 20, only *The Spirit of St. Louis* was ready to go. But — would it ever get off the ground? It was overloaded with gasoline. The runway was wet and muddy from rain. And the wind was blowing in the wrong direction. Still, this was Lindbergh's big chance to beat the other two planes. He decided to take it.

Lindbergh slipped into his flying suit and put on his helmet and goggles. Then he climbed into the cockpit. As the engine roared, someone shouted, "Good luck, kid!"

At first the plane moved slowly. Some men had to push it to get it moving. Soon it gathered speed, but it wouldn't lift off the ground. It looked as if *The Spirit of St. Louis* would crash. At the last minute, the little plane rose into the air. It cleared some telephone wires at the end of the runway by just 20 feet.

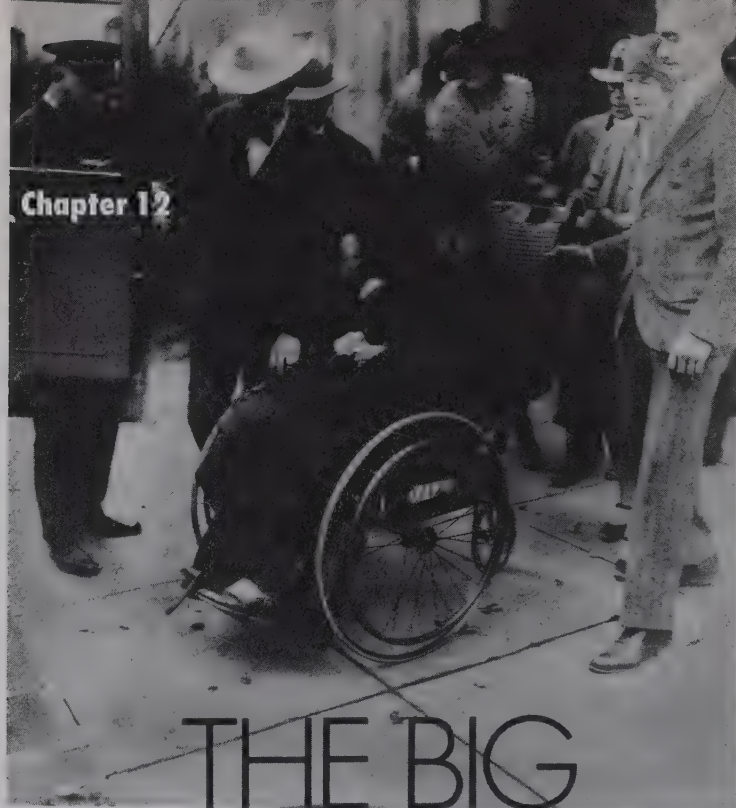
Hours later, Lindbergh was far out over the Atlantic, flying through heavy clouds. The air grew cold. Lindbergh put his bare hand out the cockpit window. It was stung by pieces of ice. Now Lindbergh knew he was in serious danger. If ice formed on his wings, it would drag his plane down into the sea. He had to reach clear air at once! Carefully Lindbergh turned the plane until he reached the open sky. Then he flew around the clouds to get back on course. The small, silver plane flew on.

One thousand miles from Paris, Lindbergh faced another danger — sleepiness. The night before his take-off, he had been too busy and excited to sleep. Now, at noon on May 21, he found it hard to stay awake. Sleep was winning out. And to fall asleep could mean death. Lindbergh shook his head and stamped his feet. But it was no use. Finally he forced his head out the cockpit window. He let a blast of cold air rush into his lungs. The shock made him feel fresh again.

Now wide awake, Lindbergh saw a fishing fleet below him. He knew land was near, but he wasn't sure of his direction. He dove his plane down a few feet over the boats. "Which way is Ireland?" Lindbergh shouted. Only one man appeared, but he didn't answer. An hour later, however, Lindbergh reached the coast of Ireland, exactly where he had planned. Then he headed toward France.

At Le Bourget airfield outside Paris, a huge crowd began to gather. Night fell. Then, at 10:18 PM, the sound of a motor was heard over the airfield. Searchlights picked up Lindbergh's plane overhead.

Four minutes later, after 33½ hours in the air, the plane landed in the darkness. A mob of people rushed toward *The Spirit of St. Louis*. They lifted Lindbergh over their heads and shouted his name. The next day, the man who had flown the Atlantic nonstop, alone, was a world hero. Back home, "Lucky Lindy" got a welcome never seen before.



THE BIG OIL SCANDAL

It was one of the worst scandals in American history. For the first time, a high Cabinet officer went to jail. So did a great millionaire oilman. It shook the country to its roots.

What was it? It was the Teapot Dome scandal of the 1920's. How did it come about? In 1920 Warren Harding was elected President of the United States. Harding put some of his good friends in top jobs. Harding did not know it, but some of these men were crooked. One of these friends was Albert B. Fall, who had been a Senator from New Mexico. Fall wore Western clothes and had a large mustache. He looked like a movie sheriff. Harding made him Secretary of the Interior in his Cabinet.

Since 1910 the government had owned several oil fields. These were set aside to supply the Navy with oil in case of war. One of them was called Teapot Dome. It was in Wyoming. Another, called Elk Hills, was in California.

Fall soon took charge of these government oil fields. Then he made a secret deal with two rich oilmen. He gave them the right — called a lease — to pump oil out of the fields and sell it. Elk Hills was leased to Edward L. Doheny. Teapot Dome was leased to Harry Sinclair.

There was no law against leasing these fields to oil companies. But the secret deals made by Fall were “steals.” Under Fall’s secret deals, Doheny and Sinclair could have made \$100 million each. And the government would have gotten very little in return. Fall was bribed (given money) to make these deals.

News of the deals soon leaked out. In 1923, after Harding's death, a Senate committee began looking into them. Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana was in charge. Great pressure was put on Walsh to stop looking into these deals. Private detectives checked into his life, looking for scandal. His phones were



tapped and his mail opened. He got letters threatening to kill him. But Walsh was not afraid.

One day a newspaperman from New Mexico came to Walsh's committee. He said that in 1920 Fall was practically "broke." He had been unable to pay taxes on his cattle ranch for eight years. Yet now he was buying land worth \$124,000. And he was paying off all his debts — often with brand new \$100 bills.

Senator Walsh wanted to know where this money was coming from. Doheny rushed to Washington to save Fall's neck. He said that he had "loaned" Fall \$100,000 in cash. He had sent the money to him in a little black bag. Wasn't this a lot of money to carry around in a bag? Walsh wanted to know. "Not to me," said Doheny. "No more than \$25 or \$50 to the ordinary man."

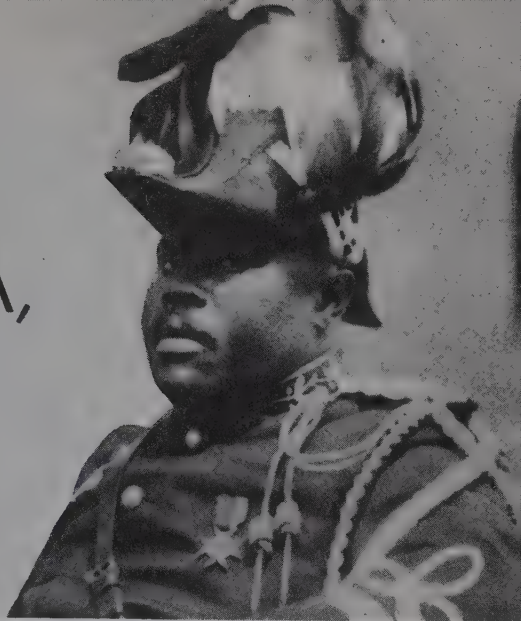
Then Walsh began looking into Fall's deal with Harry Sinclair. Sinclair's secretary had said that he had turned over \$68,000 to the manager of Fall's ranch. But he told the Walsh committee a different story. He had not said "68 thous." He had said "six or eight cows" — which sounded the same. It was all a mistake, he said. But Walsh kept digging. It was finally proved that Sinclair had given Fall more than \$300,000!

All three men — Fall, Doheny, and Sinclair — were put on trial for bribery. The two millionaire oilmen were found not guilty. But Fall was found guilty, fined \$100,000, and sent to prison for a year. He was the first member of a U.S. Cabinet ever to go to jail. Sinclair later went to jail for refusing to answer questions on the stand. He got a nine-month sentence. (It was also found that he had tried to bribe a member of the jury at his trial.) In addition, Sinclair had to return \$12 million to the government. Doheny had to return almost \$35 million.

Doheny died in 1935, Fall in 1944, and Sinclair in 1956. This case led the U.S. government to guard more carefully against crooked deals in its business operations.

Chapter 13

AFRICA, LAND OF OUR FATHERS



The parade was one of the largest that New York City had ever seen. Fifty thousand happy people and dozens of brass bands marched down Lenox Avenue, one of the main streets of Harlem. The flags flew, drums rolled, and trumpets played “ta-ran-ta-ra” as the marchers headed toward Madison Square Garden.

The leader of the parade was Marcus Garvey. Who was Marcus Garvey? What was the big parade about?

Marcus Garvey was a black man with a dream. He dreamed of a black nation ruled by black men. He said that the black people of the United States, the West Indies, and Europe should leave those places. They should return to Africa. So in 1914 he set up a club called the Universal Negro Improvement Association. The UNIA, said Garvey, would “take Africa, arm it, and make it the homeland and defender of Negroes the world over.”

The paraders were members of UNIA. They were on their way to the big meeting of the 1921 UNIA Convention.

Marcus Garvey was born on the island of Jamaica in 1887. Marcus never went to school. But he read every book he could find about Africa and Africans. Every-

body said that Marcus really had a good education — that he got all by himself.

When Garvey was 14 he tried to do something to help the working people of Jamaica. First he organized a strike. It was a flop. Then he organized a political party. That was a flop, too. But young Garvey was not discouraged. He had plans to do something for his people.

First he went to England. In the daytime he worked as a printer. At night he went to London University to study more about the life of Negroes. Soon he became an expert on the way Negroes lived all over the world. His reading taught him that blacks could do anything that whites could do. But first they had to get organized. So he went home to Jamaica and set up the UNIA.

Then Marcus went to Harlem, the capital of black America. As soon as Garvey got to New York he reorganized the UNIA. He began to let people know about his ideas. Negroes can help themselves, he said.

Garvey was a powerful speechmaker. His voice was rich. It could be soft and it could roar. When Marcus Garvey made a speech, chills of hope and pride ran up and down people's spines. The UNIA began to grow.

Garvey made hundreds of speeches. He told the people about the great kingdoms and proud rulers of Africa's past. He said, "We can be like them." "Black," said Garvey, "is the color of strength and beauty." By 1919 there was a UNIA club in every big city. Thousands of black Americans had given 10 million dollars to help out.

Whites couldn't join the UNIA. Garvey wouldn't let them in, nor would he let them give money or buy stock in the businesses UNIA set up. Still there were some whites who were big supporters of the Back to Africa Movement. Some of these were good-hearted people, people who really thought that Africa offered the black man his best chance. Some were Ku Klux Klansmen and members of other hate groups. They

were all for Garvey because they liked the idea of having black Americans leave the country.

How did the millions of American Negroes feel about all this? Some were for Garvey. They became his followers. Others thought the idea was good, but said they would stay here. Many Negro leaders were against Garvey. America is our home, said some. We want our rights here. Still other leaders said Garvey was a crook. They accused him of cheating people and putting on a big show so he could become rich and powerful.

Many black Americans called Garvey a racist. It is true that he wanted only *pure-blooded* black people in the UNIA. He wouldn't let people who had any white ancestors join. He said they were not welcome. For this reason, Garvey was hated and feared by many Negroes.

But the UNIA grew. The 1921 meeting in Madison Square Garden was the biggest meeting UNIA ever had. The crowd was packed into the Garden and in the streets around it. They cheered Garvey and called him the President General of Africa.

Soon, however, the great dream of Marcus Garvey was to end. He started a steamship line, the Black Star Line, to take people to Africa. But he got in trouble with the law for selling stock for his steamer line. The government said Garvey was using the U.S. mails to cheat people. He fought for two years. But in 1925 he was sentenced to jail for five years.

Two years later President Coolidge said that there was no clear proof that Garvey had ever cheated anybody. The President let Garvey out of jail. But the UNIA movement had already begun to fail.

Marcus Garvey, dreamer and President General of Africa, died in London, England, in 1940. He never did get to Africa, nor did any of his followers. Although the UNIA died, the pride and hope of Marcus Garvey lives. Today more and more Americans are willing to forget the racist side of Garvey's appeal. What they remember is the important part of his message — that black is proud and black is beautiful.

PART 3

INTOLERANCE



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A TIME OF FEAR AND PREJUDICE

The 1920's was a time of fun, flappers, jazz, and the Charleston. It was the time of Prohibition and "Lucky Lindy" on his solo flight to Paris, and a great age of Negro art and writing in New York City's Harlem. Looking back, the twenties seems like a time when America was young and full of fun. It was a time when Americans were ready to try new things.

That is one way to remember the twenties. But there are other things to remember, too. The twenties was also a time of fear and prejudice.

What were Americans afraid of? For one thing, a Communist revolution had taken place in Russia in 1917. A number of revolutions had swept Europe toward the end of World War I. But the revolution in Russia was one of the most violent the world had ever seen. The Communists, or Reds, not only took over the government. They killed off thousands of their enemies. All the members of Russia's royal family were shot to

death. The Communists seized factories, mills, and business firms from their owners. Then a bloody civil war broke out between the Reds (Communists) and Whites (anti-Communists), and many refugees began fleeing the country. Russia was in great confusion, and newspapers printed horrible stories of what was happening there.


All this started a "Red Scare" in the United States. Many Americans thought that there might be a Red revolution in the U.S. To some, "Communist" and "Red" became dirty words. Other Americans were just as afraid of *anarchists*. (Anarchists are people who are against *all* forms of government.) In 1919 the U.S. rounded up and jailed thousands of people accused of being Communists or anarchists. Some were put on a boat and sent to Russia.

During the 1920's, many Americans were prejudiced against people whose race, religion, or nationality were "different." This prejudice had many effects. It helped put an end to the flood of immigrants from Europe. Some Americans didn't like immigrants because many came from southern and eastern Europe. "America must be kept American," people said — and they passed laws that slammed the door on these immigrants.

Prejudice also helped build up the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920's. The Klan was against Negroes, Catholics, Jews, and foreigners. It wanted America to be run by "native, white, Protestant" people. The Klan murdered, whipped, and tortured many people it didn't like. It didn't do these things only in the South. By the mid-1920's, most members of the Klan lived in the North.

There was fear of new ideas, too. In Tennessee and other states, laws were passed against teaching the theory of evolution. This led to the famous "monkey trial" in Tennessee in 1925.

People don't like to remember some of these things now. But they all happened. They are a part of our history.



ELK WALLOW
PICNIC
GROUNDS
FOR
WHITE
ONLY

A wave of intolerance swept America after World War I. In some states, schools couldn't teach subjects that "went against the Bible." A growing Ku Klux Klan was another sign of the times. Unsolved bomb explosions, including one in New York's Wall Street (upper right), were blamed on "Reds" and anarchists. Many people said that prejudice against immigrants — as well as fear of anarchists — caused the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927.





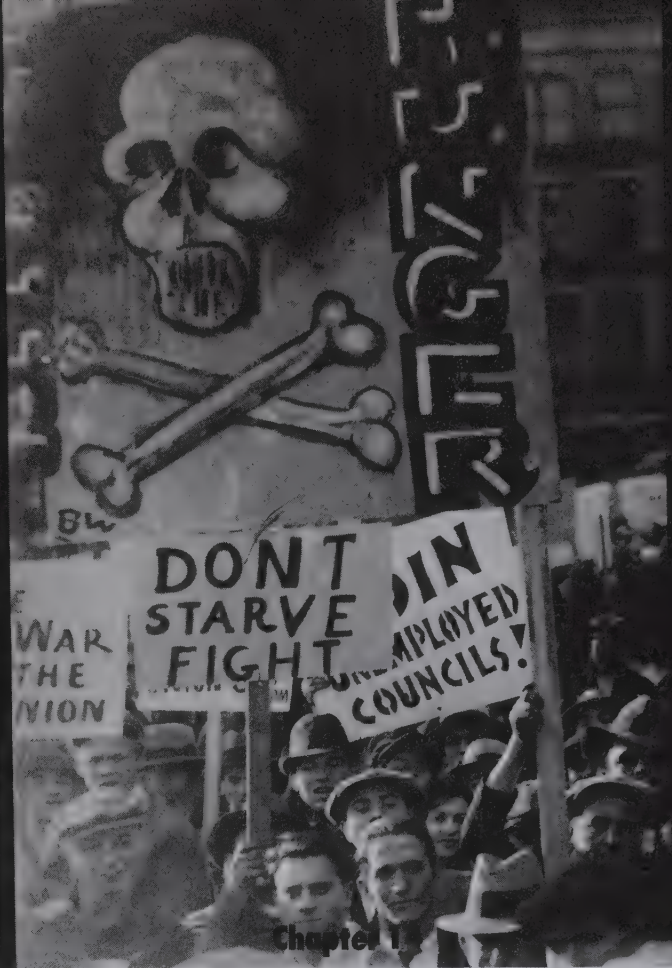


American artists looked at their country with a new eye during the 1920's and 1930's. Many tried to capture "the American character" in their art. One of the most famous paintings from this time is Grant Wood's *American Gothic*. It shows a Midwest farm couple. They are strong, stern, religious people — yet narrow-minded and sad at the same time. What do you see in the faces of this couple?



Among the best young writers America produced during the 1920's were Ernest Hemingway (left), F. Scott Fitzgerald (below, with his wife), and Sinclair Lewis (lower left).





Chapter 1

RED SCARE

From the spring of 1919 to the end of 1920, the United States had a very serious scare. Many people were afraid of communism. They thought that Communists might take over the U.S. government by revolution.

A Communist revolution had overthrown the government of Russia in 1917. This happened during World War I, when the Russian people were fighting hard against the Germans. Because of this revolution, Russia quit the war — and stopped helping the Allies.

People in the United States were afraid because the Communists said they wanted a world revolution. They wanted to take over the government of every country. “Workers of the world, unite! Revolt against your bosses!” the Communists said. “Bosses” also meant the heads of governments.

In 1919 the Communist Party of America was set up. Right away it began telling workers to fight for a revolution. It stirred up trouble and hate between workers and bosses in many large industries.

What was happening in the United States at this time? There were many strikes going on, for one thing. During the war, there had been none. Now it seemed as if everyone was going out on strike. In Boston the police struck. In Seattle there was a general strike — all the workers walked out. A strike among the steelworkers in Pittsburgh went on for months, and bitter fighting broke out. The U.S. Steel Company in Pittsburgh said that Communists had started the strike. Whether or not that was true, many people believed that Communists and anarchists were somehow mixed up in all strikes that took place. And they were worried about it.

Race riots were another American problem. The black population of several Northern cities had grown by leaps and bounds during World War I. After the war there were race riots in some of these cities. The worst riot of all took place in Chicago in the summer of 1919. It lasted six days and took 38 lives. Some people believed that Communists were behind the riots. “Reds are behind these riots just as sure as they are mixed up in the strikes,” these people said.

Bombs were a third cause of the scare. One day a postmaster checked some strange packages in his post

office. They were addressed to some of the biggest names in U.S. business and banking. He discovered that the packages had bombs inside. Other bombs were not found in time. One went off in Wall Street's stock market center, and killed a number of people. Who could have sent the bombs? To many Americans it looked as if they were sent by Communists or anarchists.

Even without all these troubles there was a lot of hate in the air. Some of it had lasted since the war years. Then most Americans had been against anything German. But after the war it was a feeling against anyone or anything "different." Some Americans were against anything foreign or strange. This meant not only Communists and anarchists. It also meant Negroes, Orientals, Jews, and Catholics. Before long some people who felt this way began to say that anybody they did not like was a Communist.

Late in 1919, the U.S. Attorney General, A. Mitchell Palmer, led a series of raids. He wanted to hunt out the Reds. The Russian Communists called themselves Reds. So this name was given to American Communists — and to almost anyone else who wanted to make big changes in American politics. Palmer's raiders went into immigrant neighborhoods all over the country. They arrested thousands of immigrants. Some were people who had already become citizens. And some *were* Communists. But most of the people jailed by Palmer were not Communists at all. Even if they had been, it was not against the law to be a Communist or an anarchist.

Then Congress passed a special law. It said that the government could deport any radicals who were not citizens. This meant they could be sent back to the countries they came from. The only crime that most of them had committed was to have a name that sounded "foreign." Several hundred persons were deported. A few were Communists who may have plotted to take over the U.S. But most of them were innocent.

The country seemed to have gone crazy with fear. Now many immigrants were afraid to speak out. Other Americans began to be afraid to say the "wrong" thing. They thought they would be suspected too. In New York elected members of the Socialist Party were not allowed to take their seats in the legislature. The right of free speech was in danger.

Most of the people who had been jailed were let go after a time. But during the raids and jailings, the civil rights of many people had been taken away. Many American leaders and just ordinary people, too, felt that the whole Bill of Rights was in danger.

Slowly Americans began to come to their senses. They realized that there were a few Communists in the country who might be planning to take over the government. But that was no reason to suspect a person of being a Red just because he was different. Besides, Communists and other radicals did not seem to be taking over anything at all.

More and more people came to see that most union leaders were not Reds. They saw that labor unions were trying to hold on to gains they had made during the war years. And now prices were going up. Workingmen needed better wages just to keep up with the cost of food and rent. So the unions were fighting for better pay.

By the end of 1920, the Red Scare had practically died out.

Long after the Red Scare was over, many of the things which had helped cause it remained. There was no doubt that communism was dangerous. The killings and torture in crowded Russian prisons still frightened many people. Communists in the Soviet Union and other countries still say they are for world revolution.

Here in America, too, some of the other causes of the Red Scare remained. There was still much prejudice against immigrants and members of minority groups. These feelings continued to cause suffering and hardship for millions of people.



Chapter 15

IMMIGRANTS NOT WANTED

*Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.*

These words are part of a poem on the Statue of Liberty. They welcomed immigrants to the United States. Emma Lazarus, the woman who wrote this famous poem, was a native-born American citizen. Emma was Jewish, so she was also a member of a minority group. She was proud that America welcomed immigrants from minority groups.

America had always opened its arms to the people of Europe. Millions had come here to find freedom and a better life. They worked in factories, mines, fields, and forests. They helped build our cities, railroads, dams, and canals. Between 1901 and 1914, about one million immigrants a year came to the United States. Many more began arriving again after World War I.

But in 1921 the flood of immigration was stopped. That year Congress passed a new immigration law. For the first time, each country was told how many immigrants it could send to the U.S. (Immigration from Japan had already been cut down to almost nothing. Immigration from China had been stopped completely back in 1882.) The new law was aimed mostly against people from eastern and southern Europe. It meant to cut down on the number of Italians, Greeks, Poles, and Slavs coming to America.

What did the law say? It said that a country could send to the United States only a tiny part of the

number of its people already living here. This was called the *quota system*. This system worked in favor of the countries of northern Europe. This was because these countries had sent huge numbers of immigrants to the U.S. when America was young. The countries of eastern and southern Europe were a different story. The quota system worked against them because they had sent far fewer immigrants to the U.S. (Most of the immigrants from these countries hadn't started coming here until after 1880.)

The new law meant that people from England, Sweden, Ireland, or Germany could still come to this country easily. But people from Italy, Hungary, or Poland would have to wait many years for a chance.

England was allowed to send about 65,000 immigrants a year. But Italy was allowed to send 5,600. Greece was allowed to send only 308! In all, no more than about 150,000 immigrants could come to the U.S. in a year.

Why did the United States decide to limit immigration in 1921?

1. Many people in the U.S., especially members of the Ku Klux Klan, did not like "foreigners." At that time, the Klan had millions of members. (The Klan members forgot that their ancestors had also been immigrants — and foreigners.)

2. Many Americans, whose ancestors came from northern Europe, believed that people from eastern and southern Europe were not as "good" as they were.

3. Some people feared that many of the immigrants from eastern and southern Europe might be "Reds" or anarchists or criminals.

4. Some people did not like immigrants from eastern or southern Europe because many of them were Catholics or Jews.

5. Many workers were afraid that immigrants would take their jobs away. Immigrants, they said, would work longer hours for less money.

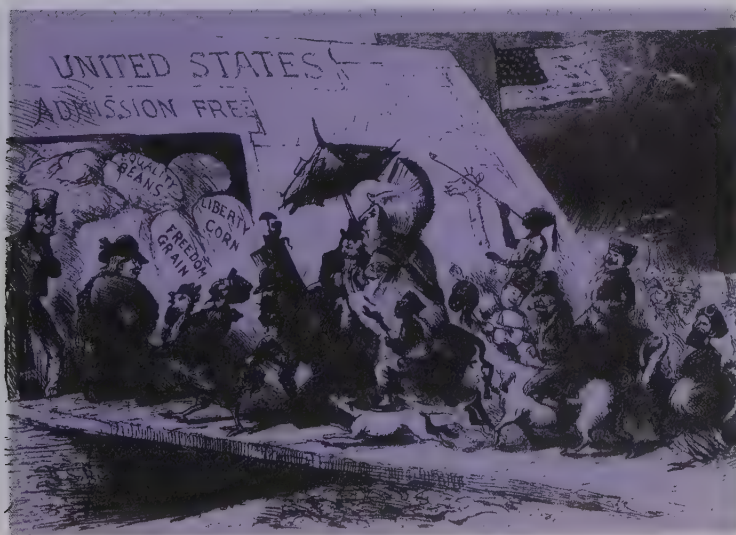
A new immigration law, passed in 1952, did little

to change the unfair quota system. President Harry Truman spoke out against it. "The idea behind this law," he said, "is that Americans with English or Irish names are better people than Americans with Italian or Greek or Polish names. Such an idea is unworthy of our ideals." President John F. Kennedy also spoke out against the law. "It is against the spirit of the Declaration of Independence which says that 'all men are created equal,'" he said.

As the years passed, more and more people spoke out against this law. Americans began to understand that quotas based on nationality were really nonsense. President Kennedy asked for a fairer system. So did President Lyndon Johnson.

Finally in 1965 Congress passed a new immigration law. It did away with the quota system. The new law favors relatives of American citizens and people with skills needed here. It does not matter what country they come from. The new law allows 170,000 immigrants a year from outside the Western Hemisphere. It allows 120,000 a year from the Western Hemisphere.

President Johnson signed the new law at a special ceremony near the Statue of Liberty.





A NEW KLAN

It was a raw, windy night on top of Stone Mountain, Georgia. Sixteen men stood there, shaking with cold. They were dressed in white robes. Their faces were covered with hoods. Then one of them touched a match to a large cross. It went up in flames. The Ku Klux Klan — dead since 1871 — had been born again. It was Thanksgiving night, 1915.

The new Ku Klux Klan was the dream of a man named William Simmons. In 1915 he was helped by a movie called *The Birth of a Nation*. It made heroes of the first Klansmen who lived after the Civil War. Simmons said now was the time to start the Klan again. He did it that night on Stone Mountain.

The first Klan had been against Negroes and those who tried to help them. The new Klan was also against Catholics, Jews, foreigners, and “sinners.” “America for the Americans,” said the Klan—and “keep the Pope out of the White House.” Klansmen were also against people who drank, gambled, or didn’t go to church.

From 1920 on, the Klan grew fast. By 1925 it had about five million members. That year 40,000 Klansmen marched through Washington, D.C., to show their power. The first Klan had been powerful only in the South. But the new Klan was strong in the North and West, too. In some states it helped elect governors, Senators, and Representatives.

What made the Klan so popular? Many Americans did not like people who were not just like themselves. They thought that such people ought to be “kept in their place.”

Another thing that made the Klan popular was this: It gave many men in dull, small towns something to do. These men were like children in many ways. They liked the secret grips and passwords, the masks and

robes. They enjoyed the parades, picnics, and barbecues. The Klan gave them a language of their own. This is how two Klansmen might greet each other:

AYAK (Are You A Klansman?)

AKIA (A Klansman I Am.)

SAN BOG (Strangers Are Near. Be On Guard.)

Notice that these Klan words are made by the first letter of each word in the message.

Here are some other Klan terms:

Invisible Empire: the Ku Klux Klan.

Imperial Wizard: chief of the Invisible Empire.

Grand Dragon: head of a state Klan group.

Klavern: a local Klan group.

But the Klan was not just a childish club. It believed in terror and violence, like the first Klan. In 1921 a newspaper accused the Klan of: four murders; one case of torture; one branding with acid; 42 whippings; 27 tar-and-feather parties; five kidnappings; 43 warnings to people to leave town.

Nowhere was the Klan stronger than in Indiana. In that state, the Klan leader bragged, "I am the law!" This man, David Stephenson, made himself the boss of Indiana's politics. Even the governor of Indiana took orders from him. Stephenson became so powerful he started talking about running for President. But soon he made a very bad mistake. He caused the death of a young woman. When that happened the newspapers made headlines of the story. Many newspapers had been against the Klan and its influence on politics for a long time.

The Stephenson scandal broke the power of the Klan in Indiana and elsewhere. More newspaper stories about Klan graft and fraud helped people become fed up with the KKK. Members began quitting. By 1929 the Klan was just a shadow of its former self.

During World War II, some Klansmen spoke up for Hitler and the Nazis. Then the KKK had to go out of business. Today a new Klan fights against civil rights laws. But it is not as strong as it was in the 1920's.

WERE THEY INNOCENT?

On August 23, 1927, two men died in the electric chair. They had been found guilty of murder. But many people believed they were innocent. These people said that the two men were killed because they were foreigners and anarchists. Anarchists are people who are against any kind of powerful government. The execution divided all America. To this day, men and women still argue the case.

This is what happened:

On April 15, 1920, five gunmen held up a shoe factory in South Braintree, Massachusetts. The paymaster and his guard were killed. The gunmen got away with nearly \$16,000.

Soon after, police arrested two Italian immigrants for the crime. One was Nicola Sacco, a shoe worker. The other was Bartolomeo Vanzetti, a fish peddler. Both men were anarchists. At this time, America was right in the middle of the Red Scare. Federal agents and police were rounding up people accused of being anarchists and Communists.

Both Sacco and Vanzetti were peaceful men. They were against war and using force. They had never been in trouble before.

But there were some things that people held against them: Both men had anarchist leaflets attacking the U.S. government and the whole idea of government. Both men had dodged the draft in World War I. Both men carried guns. They said that the guns were to protect them against people who hated anarchists.

Neither Sacco nor Vanzetti had a good alibi. Vanzetti could not remember where he had gone with his pushcart on April 15. Sacco had gone to the Italian



THE PASSION OF SACCO & VANZETTI, BY BEN SHAHN, THE WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

consul in Boston. But there were times during the day that Sacco could not account for.

At the trial, several witnesses said they saw Sacco and Vanzetti at the scene of the murder. Other witnesses were sure Sacco and Vanzetti were not the men.

There were other questions: Five men had taken part in the holdup. Where were the other three men? Why hadn't any of the stolen money been found on either Sacco or Vanzetti?

The jury found the men guilty of murder and robbery. They were sentenced to die. Many people then became angry. Among them were famous writers and lawyers, who said: Sacco and Vanzetti had not gotten a fair trial. The judge, Webster Thayer, was prejudiced against the two men. Judge Thayer called Sacco and Vanzetti insulting names outside the courtroom. Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent. They were being punished because they were foreigners and anarchists.

For six years, lawyers fought to get a new trial for Sacco and Vanzetti. During this time, a gangster confessed to the two killings. He was part of a gang of professional robbers. When arrested, he had \$2,800 on him. Many policemen believed the holdup and murders were "a professional job." They said that men like Sacco and Vanzetti couldn't have done it. But Judge Thayer would not give Sacco and Vanzetti a new trial.

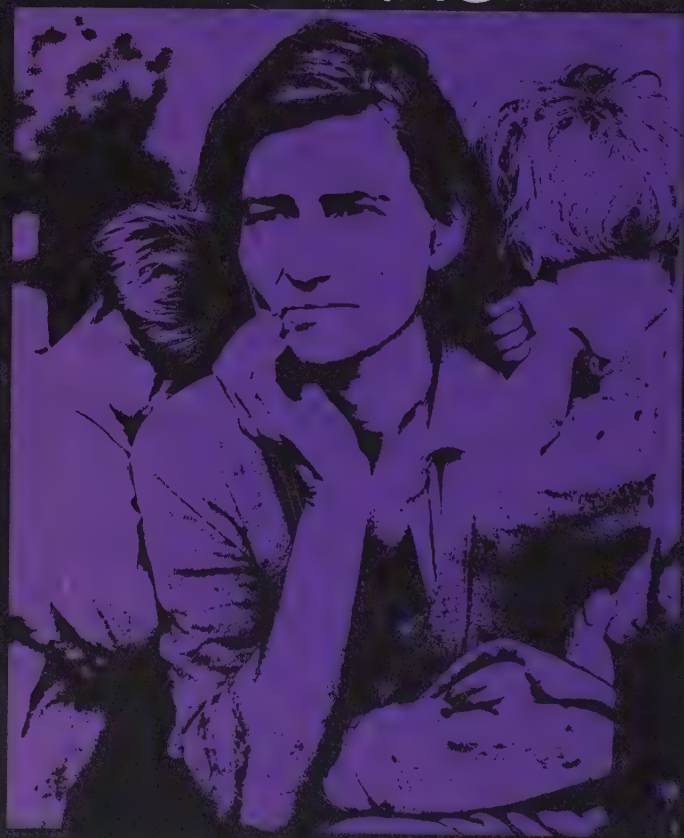
Meanwhile, three important men were chosen by the governor of Massachusetts to study the case. These men said Sacco and Vanzetti were guilty.

All over the world, people protested against the death sentence for Sacco and Vanzetti. But finally, on August 23, 1927, the two men went to the electric chair. Both men said they were not guilty. Vanzetti said, "I am innocent of all crime, not only this, but all." Sacco said, "I am never guilty, never, not yesterday, nor today, nor forever."

Many people still believe that Sacco and Vanzetti died because they were foreigners and anarchists. Still others honestly believe that they were guilty.

PART 4

THE DEPRESSION YEARS



Preface

FROM RICHES TO RAGS

On October 29, 1929, the New York stock market "crashed." Suddenly, the value of stocks went way, way down. Some stocks became worthless. Many businesses and people were "wiped out." One newspaper headline said: "Wall Street Lays an Egg."

But there was nothing funny about what happened afterward. All over the country, people began losing their jobs, their homes, their farms, and their businesses. Even many banks had to go out of business. When that happened, people lost all their savings.

This was the beginning of the Great Depression that lasted nearly 10 years. By 1932, 13 million men were out of work.

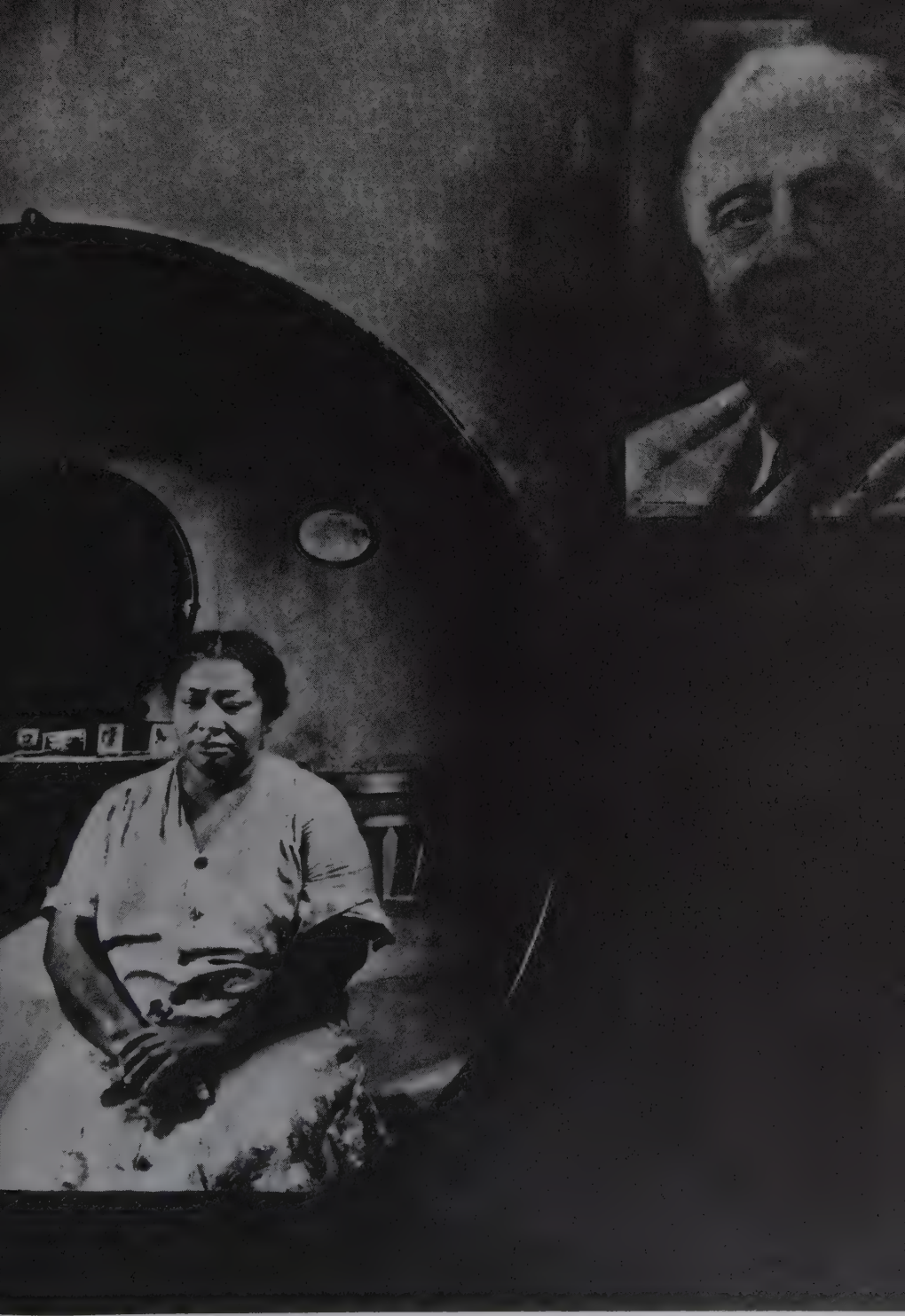
When the Depression began, Republican Herbert Hoover was President. Many people blamed him for the Depression. This was unfair because many events that caused the Depression could not be controlled by the President. But Hoover did not believe that the U.S. government should try to take action to end the Depression. And he did not believe that the government should provide money or jobs for relief. Hoover kept saying, Leave business alone and it will get better by itself. But it didn't get better. In the meantime, more and more people were losing their jobs. And many people were going hungry.

The year 1932 was the worst of the Depression. It was also an election year. The Republicans chose Hoover to run again. The Democrats chose Franklin D. Roosevelt, the governor of New York. FDR (Roosevelt) called the average American a "forgotten man." He promised "a new deal for the American people."

FDR won the election easily. His program for helping the unemployed, farmers, and business became known as the New Deal. Slowly conditions began to get better in the U.S. In 1936 FDR was re-elected President in the greatest landslide in American history. The Republican candidate, Alfred Landon, won in only two states — Maine and Vermont. It was a big victory for FDR and the New Deal.

FDR promised to carry on the New Deal. One out of three people, he said, was "ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished." FDR did carry on with the New Deal. But later he became worried about a new danger to the U.S. — Nazi Germany and its allies. The shadow of war was again falling over Europe and the world.

It was a common thing during the 1930's to keep a picture of President Franklin D. Roosevelt on the wall. FDR was a hero to millions of poor Americans. They counted on him and his New Deal program to get America out of the Depression and back on its feet again.



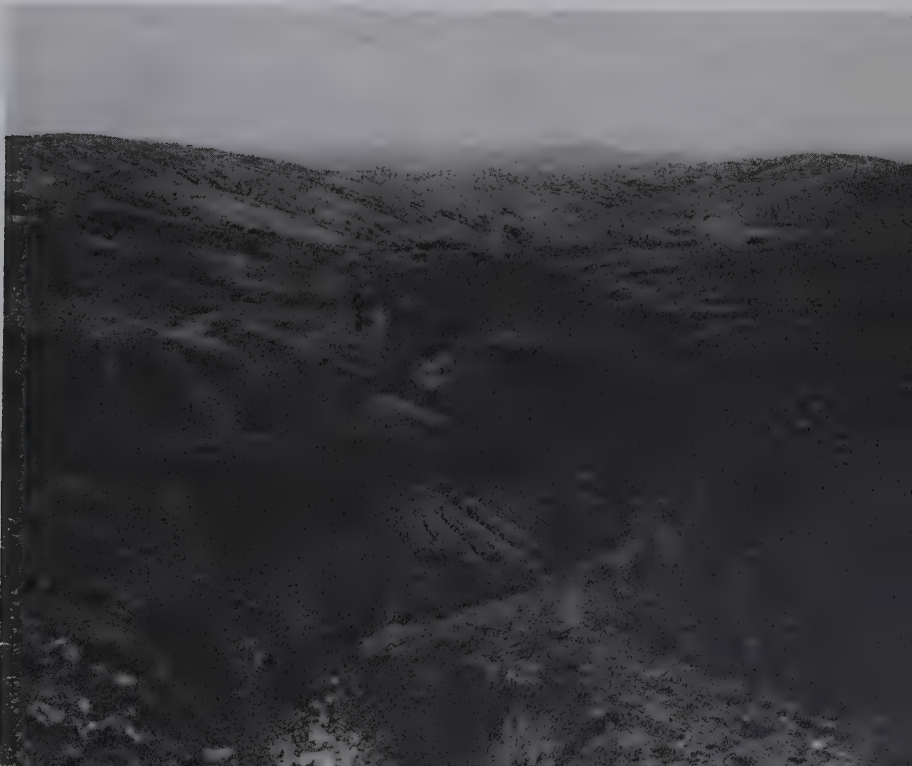


New Deal programs caused many arguments. Some people thought FDR was getting Uncle Sam tangled up in too many government programs (left). Others said he was trying to force the Supreme Court to back him up (lower left). People who supported FDR said his enemies were out to wreck his plans for U.S. recovery from the Depression.





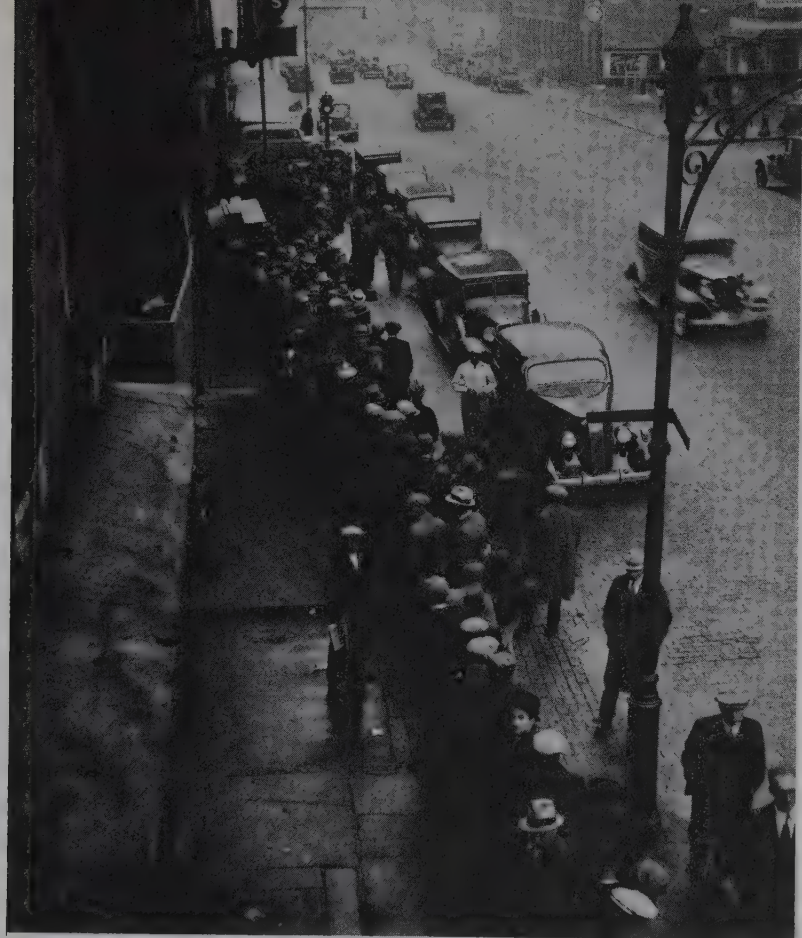
Dumping milk to make it scarce, farmers hoped to raise its price. Below, part of the Tennessee Valley region before erosion controls were started.

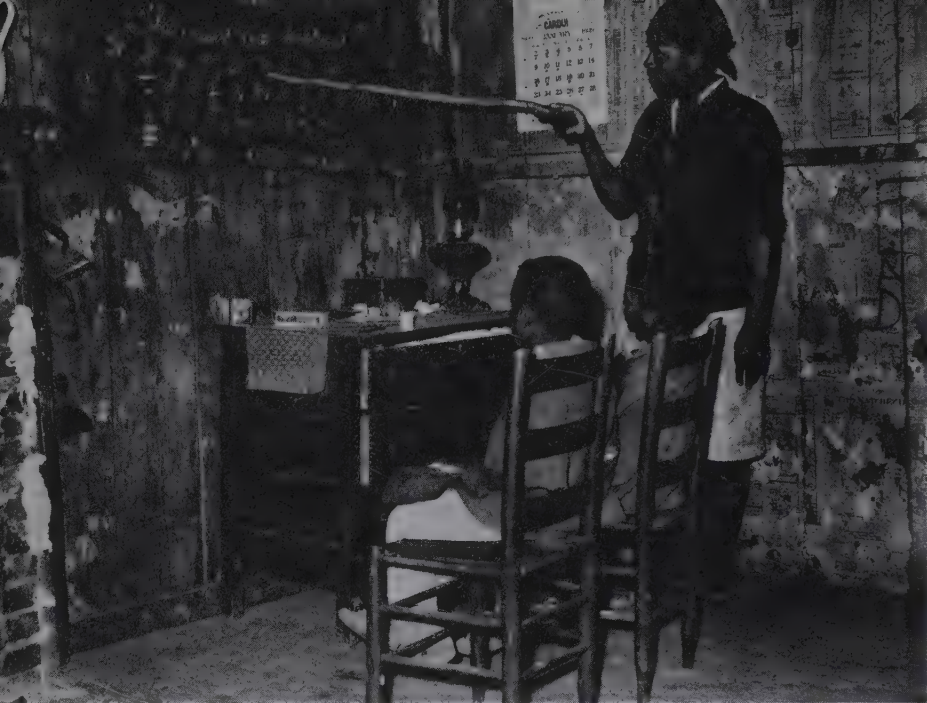


DEPRESSION RESTAURANT 5¢²⁴² 10¢

Depression prices were low because money was very scarce. Some people who lost their homes set up "shanty-towns" — even in city parks. Jobless men often stood in "bread-lines" to get food handouts. Some sold apples on the street — anything for a little money to support their families with.







Most black Americans had always known poverty, but the Depression made them poorer than ever before. In some cities, well over half of the black workers lost their jobs. "We were last hired, first fired," they said. In the South, farmers were hard hit by falling prices. Thousands of black families packed up and "hit the road." Some crowded into the cities to look for work. Many became homeless migrant workers (opposite page), always on the move.



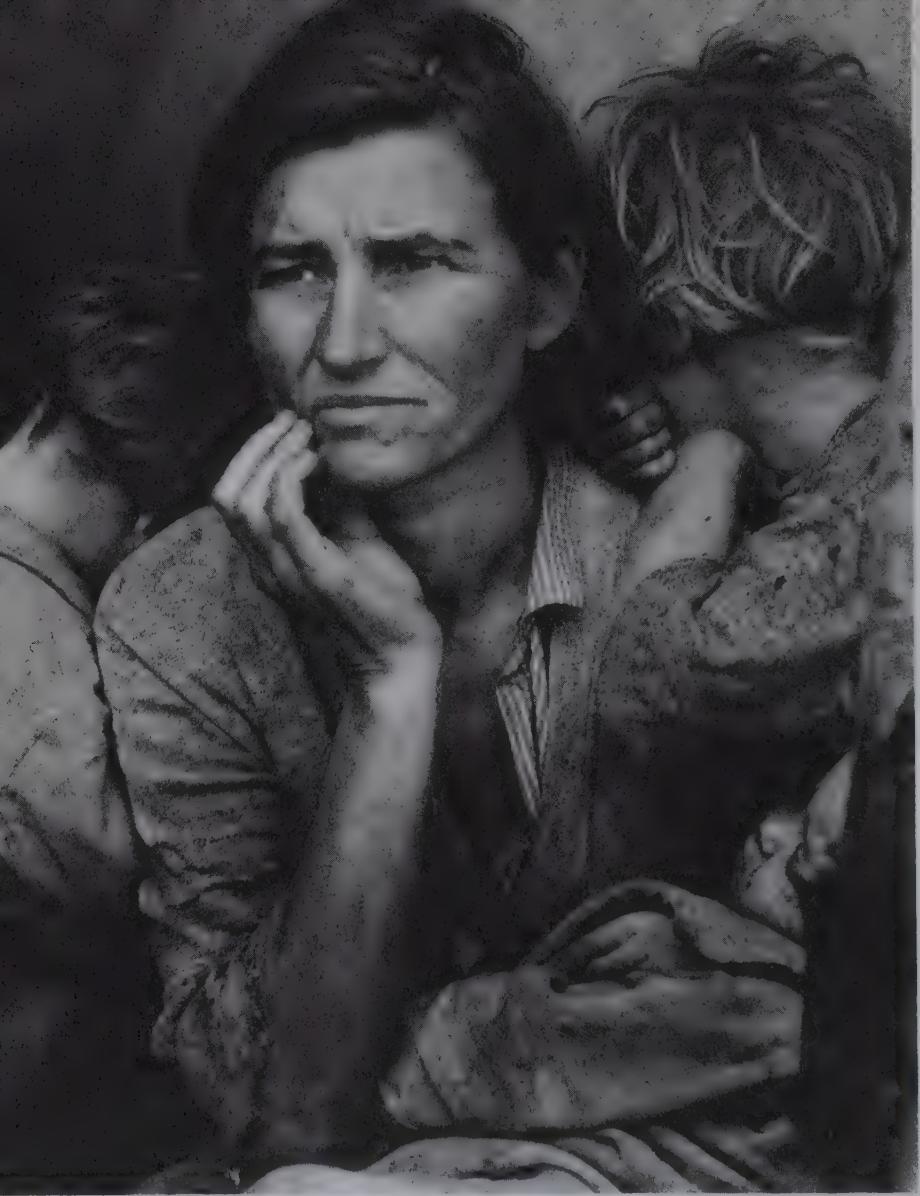




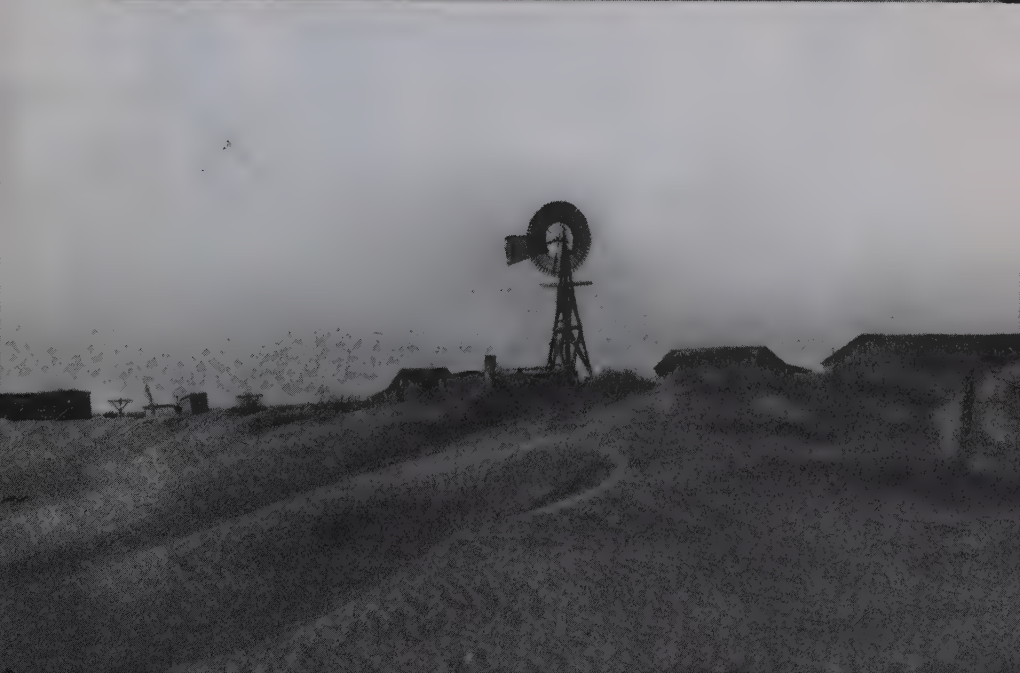
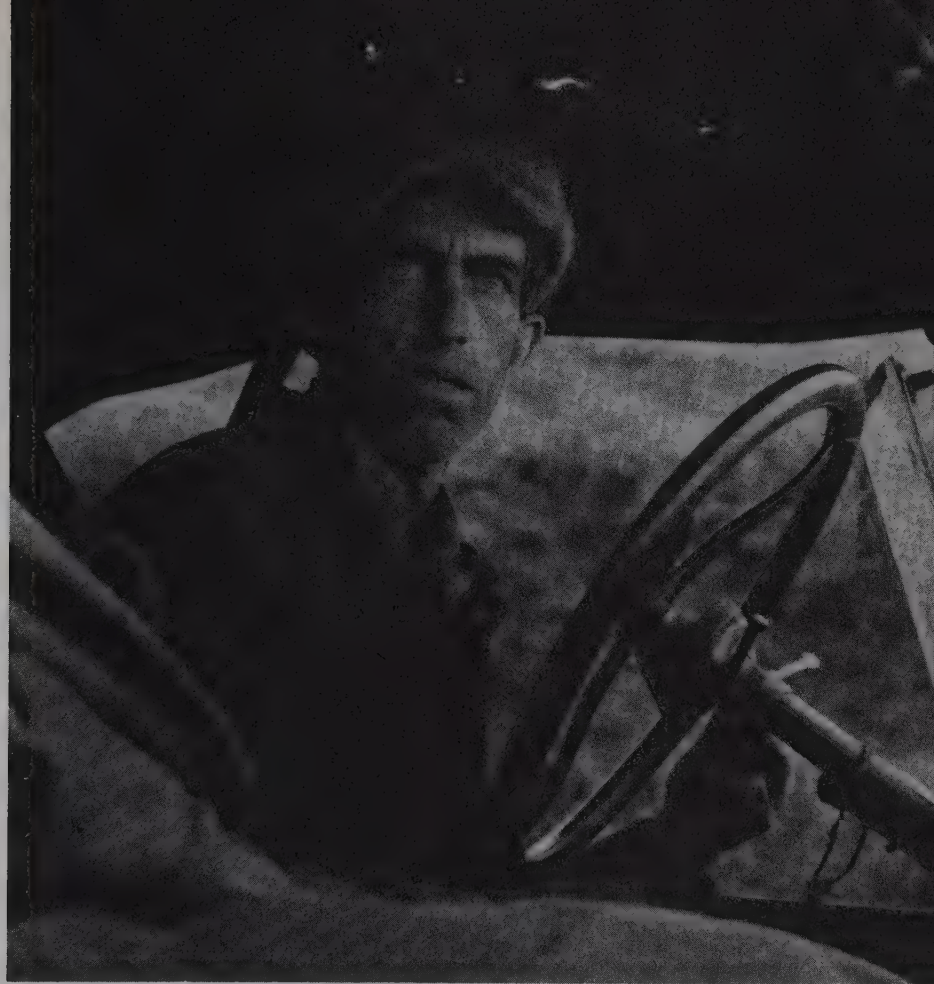


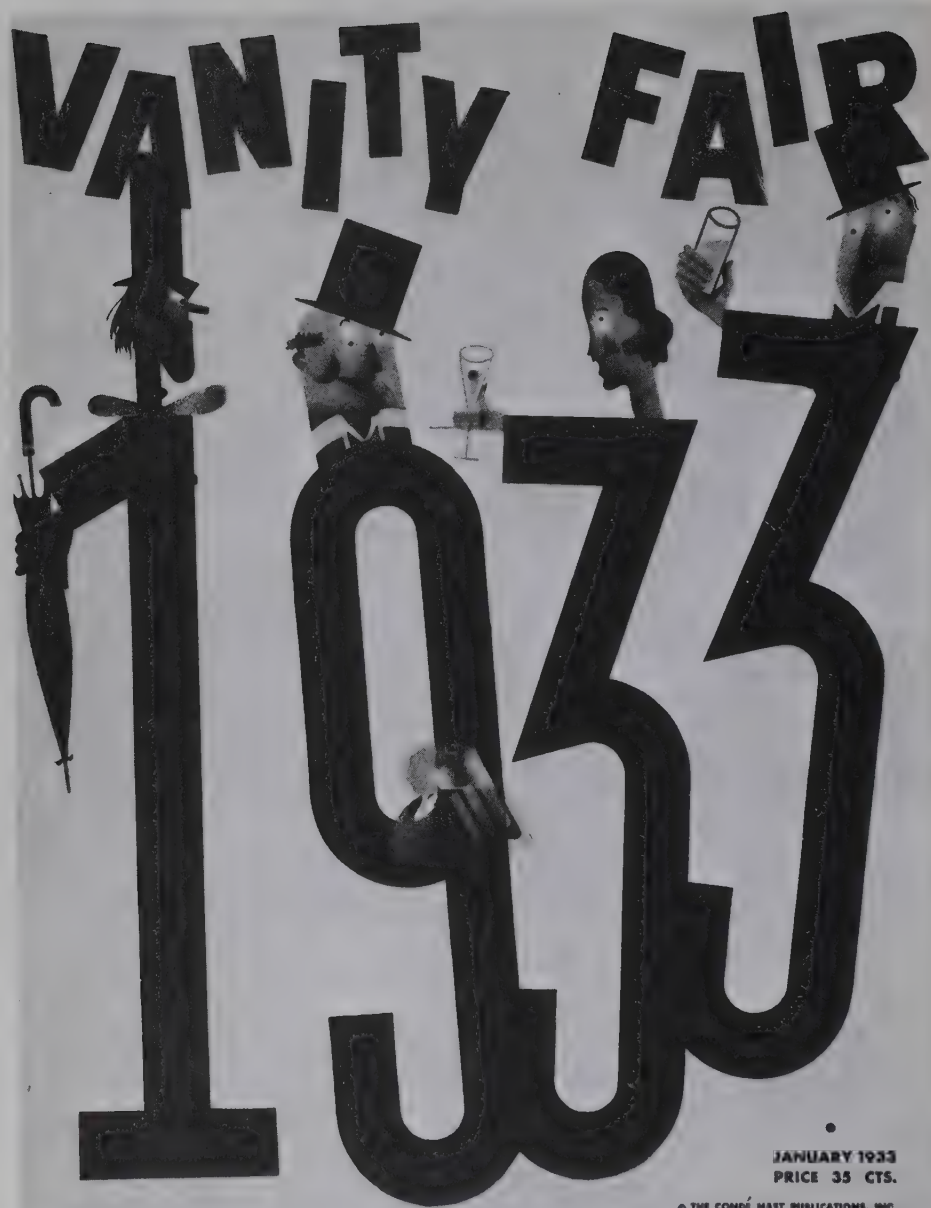
The Depression wiped out farmers on the Great Plains and in the Southwest, too. Some were tenants who only rented their farms (family at left). When prices dropped, they couldn't pay the rent. Many were tossed out with all their household goods (above). Looking for work and a warmer climate, families piled everything they owned into old cars and headed for California.





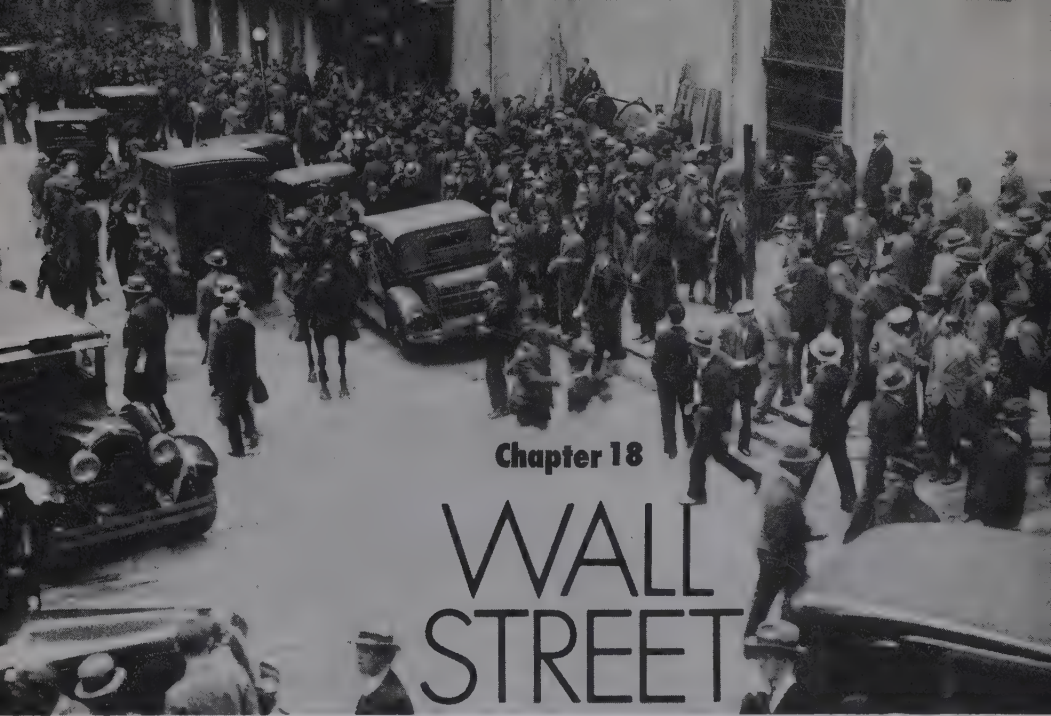
The faces of the farm families who headed for California were lined with the worry and fear and sorrow of hard times. These people had come from Texas, Oklahoma, and several other states, but they were all called "Okies." Most of the Okies had fled from the "Dust Bowl" — a huge area where sand and dust storms had whipped off the topsoil and made a wasteland of their farms.





In 1933 Prohibition ended, and drinking was legal again. Bad times or not, Americans had more than just the Depression to talk about. Big headlines in the 1930's were made by explorer Richard E. Byrd's trips to Antarctica (top right); Amelia Earhart, the daring woman flyer (center); the mysterious burning of the German airship *Hindenburg* in New Jersey in 1937.





Chapter 18

WALL STREET

LAYS AN EGG

The year was 1928, an election year. It was a year of great prosperity for most people. The Republican candidate for President was Herbert Hoover. In his speeches Hoover promised that Americans were going to have great times, and most Americans thought he was right.

“Two chickens in every pot, two cars in every garage.” This is what all Americans would soon have, Herbert Hoover said.

Business was booming, and everybody wanted to keep it that way. So Herbert Hoover and the Republicans won the election easily. No one wanted to upset the apple cart.

Many people — both the rich and some who were not so rich — were making money by buying stocks, or shares, in the nation’s companies. When a man buys a share of stock in a company, he owns part of the business. If the company makes money, he will make

money, too. When business is very good, many people want shares in the companies that make money. So the prices of stocks go up. Anyone who bought his shares before prices went up can then sell them at a profit.

In the late 1920's, it seemed as if anybody could get rich by buying and selling stocks. Some of America's richest men said so. "Just let a man save \$15 a week," one of them wrote. "If he puts it into good stocks, he will have at least \$80,000 in 20 years. His income will be around \$400 a month. Anyone can not only *be* rich, but *ought* to be rich!"

In the summer of 1929, people all over the country were buying stocks. You didn't need much cash. You bought "on margin" — made a small down payment. How could you lose? Stocks were going up, up, up. Some people thought the stock market would go on booming forever.

The average man was cleaning up. There were stories like this: A barber down the street made \$50,000 on General Motors. A taxi driver made \$100,000 from a "tip" on U.S. Steel. A beauty parlor operator watched her \$100 grow into a fortune on Wall Street. Of course most of the fortunes weren't in real dollars. They were all tied up in stocks.

The big risk in buying and selling stocks is that their value can go down as well as up. And until you sell a stock and get some real money for it, you aren't really rich — except on paper.

A few people said, "Stock prices are much too high. They're going to take a fall. And when this happens a lot of people are going to be hurt." But hardly anyone listened. Only a handful of men sold their stocks early.

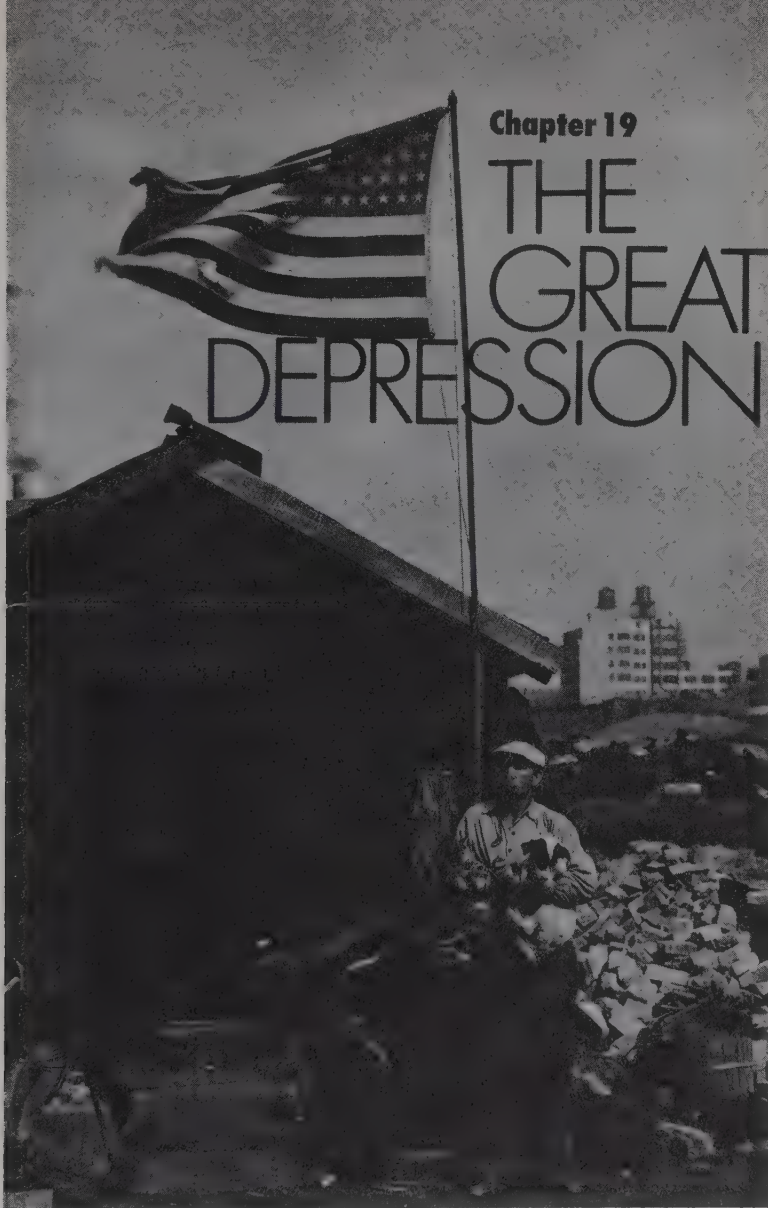
In September the stock market started to rumble. The first great break came on Thursday, October 24, 1929. That morning thousands of shares of good stock were put on sale. But no one was ready to buy at the price that was asked. So the price went down. Finally the stock sold, but at low prices. This was a sign of trouble.

Now panic swept over the stock market. Everyone wanted to sell his stocks at once, before prices went down further. But no one wanted to buy. This sent prices tumbling even lower. People went wild. They ran, shouted, cursed, and pushed, trying to sell their stocks. Extra policemen were rushed to the stock market to keep order. Within three hours, stocks lost over \$11 billion of their value. But then a group of bankers pooled their money and began to *buy* stocks. This stopped the fall in prices. Some people thought the worst was over. But it was yet to come.

Tuesday, October 29, 1929, was "Black Tuesday" — the day of the big crash. Tens of thousands of shares of stock were put on sale for whatever they could bring. But there were no buyers! Prices fell, fell, fell, wiping out millionaires and barbers alike. Stocks that once sold for \$48 a share were now offered for one dollar. Even the best stocks dropped as much as \$60 a share. In all, stocks lost \$50 billion of their value. Nothing like it had ever happened before. No one could understand it. People were in a daze. One thing that made the stock market crash so bad was that the people who bought shares "on margin" now had to pay up in cash. They thought their down payment was safe, but now it was lost, too.

October 29 was like a nightmare. One man who had been worth \$85 million in stocks was now completely broke. One company lost \$100 million it had invested in the stock market. Grocery clerks, window cleaners, and others who had bought stocks on credit now all lost their savings. Some people couldn't take it. They jumped from skyscraper windows. Others went home, put their heads in the oven, and turned on the gas.

By November the stock market had fallen even more. Millions of Americans had gone from riches to rags. It was good-bye to everything, the end of the dream of riches. The Great Depression was beginning to set in. America would suffer terribly in the years to come.



In millions of U.S. homes, frightened people were asking:

How will we pay the rent?

Where will we get money for food?

How will we buy shoes for the children?

What will become of us?

It was 1932 — the worst year of the Depression.

There was misery everywhere. It started with the stock market crash of October 1929. Then factories, mines, steel mills, and banks began shutting down. Many people lost their savings overnight. Men lost their jobs in big cities and small towns. By 1932, 13 million men — almost one out of every three — were out of work. Men stood in line all night hoping to get a job in the morning. But everywhere it was the same story — no jobs. One Depression “joke” went like this:

One high school graduate asks another, “What are you going to do now that you have a diploma?”

The other answers, “Join the army.”

“The army?” asks the first boy.

“Yeah — the army of unemployed.”

Both skilled and unskilled workers lost their jobs. They lived on their savings while they looked for work. Then they borrowed — from friends, family, or banks. Some men stood on street corners selling apples for pennies. Others stood in “breadlines” waiting for a free handout of bread and soup. Lawyers took jobs as salesmen at \$15 a week. Teachers took jobs as taxi drivers. Pay was very low. Some factory workers made less than 10 cents an hour.

“We owe the landlord, the grocer — everybody,” one jobless steelworker said. “My kids can’t go to school. They don’t have shoes.”

The suffering was terrible. In one school, a teacher asked a little girl, “What’s wrong with you?”

“I’m just hungry,” the girl said.

“You may go home and eat,” the teacher said.

“I can’t,” the child answered. “Today it’s my sister’s turn to eat.”

The children of coal miners ate dandelions and weeds.

Tens of thousands of people lost their homes. Half of the country’s farmers lost their farms. This happened because home owners and farmers could not pay the banks the money they had borrowed to pay for their property.

Many farmers became tenant farmers, paying rent for the farms they had once owned. Some farmers and their families packed up their things in old trucks and cars and headed for California. They hoped to find work picking fruit there. These poor farm families were called "Okies," because most of them came from Oklahoma. Some had lost their farms to banks. Some lost them to the terrible "dust" storms that hit the West in the 1930's.

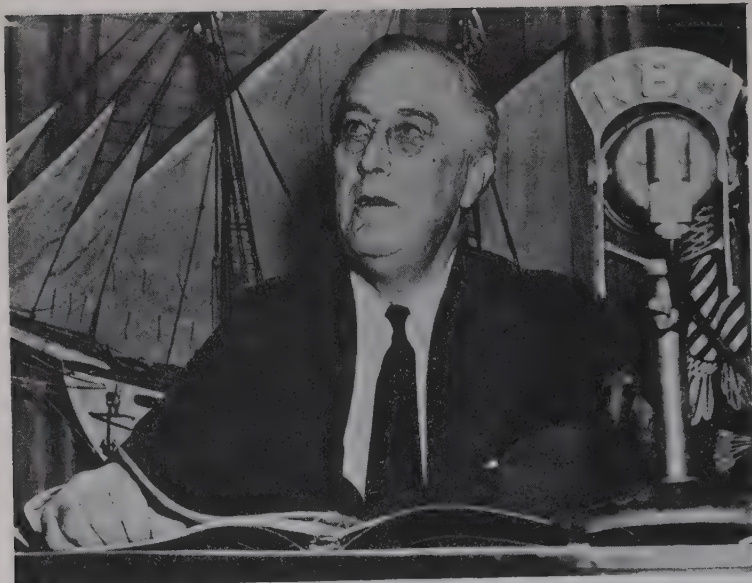
In towns and cities, storekeepers went out of business. People weren't buying anything. They had no money.

About two million men and boys roamed the country looking for work. They lived in shack towns. These towns, called "Hoovervilles," were usually on the edge of the large cities. The shanty towns had no streets, lights, or sewers. The shanties were made of boxes, pieces of tin, wood, and cardboard. They had no furniture, water, or heat. Men burned scraps of wood to keep warm. They dug into garbage cans for bits of food.

In 1932, 15,000 veterans of World War I marched on Washington, D.C. They wanted to be paid a bonus that was promised them for 1945. They brought their wives and children with them. They camped in tents and huts on empty lots. The veterans were ordered out. Many wouldn't go. President Herbert Hoover then called out troops. The troops drove the veterans out with tanks and tear gas bombs. Then they set fire to the veterans' huts and tents. Many people were angry with President Hoover for what happened.

President Hoover believed business would come out of the Depression by itself. He was against U.S. government relief — money or jobs — for the unemployed. "Prosperity," he said, "is just around the corner."

But conditions grew worse. People blamed President Hoover for the Depression, or for not doing enough about it. And they began to look to another man, Franklin D. Roosevelt, for help.



Chapter 20

FDR AND THE NEW DEAL

He promised the American people a “New Deal.” He said he would help “the forgotten man” — the jobless worker, the poor farmer. He gave hope to the frightened, hungry Americans of the Great Depression. People believed he was the friend of the common man. His name was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. On November 8, 1932, they elected him President of the United States. Soon everybody called him FDR.

On March 4, 1933, FDR was sworn in as President. It was a cold, raw day. Sleet fell on the watching crowds. But FDR’s voice was full of hope and courage. “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself,” he said. “This great nation . . . will revive and prosper. . . . We must act, and act quickly.”

Millions of people asked, Does he mean that? Is he really as sure as he sounds? Or is he faking? Many people believed that poverty and unemployment were



here to stay. Things would never be any better. Meanwhile, relief offices were closing down. They had no more money to give out. Hungry men were holding protest marches. Some people feared a revolution.

FDR promised quick action — and he gave it. He brought to Washington college professors and smart young lawyers. These men were called FDR's "Brain Trust." With FDR, they planned a new government program called the New Deal. Congress rushed to put these plans into law. Here's what took place:

To help the unemployed, Congress voted money for food, clothing, and medicine. But FDR felt it was not enough just to give people relief. He felt that people needed *work*, not just handouts. The government began work programs for the unemployed. Soon two million men were on the government payroll. They were building schools, roads, hospitals, libraries, and

post offices all over the country. Writers, artists, musicians, and teachers were given jobs, too.

Then business began to perk up. Factories and mills opened up again. This happened because people who had jobs could afford to buy the things the factories and mills produced. Soon there were more jobs in private industry.

To help the boys of families on relief, forestry camps were set up. Unemployed boys were given healthy, outdoor work. They planted trees, built dams and bridges, helped prevent floods and forest fires. For many, it was their only chance to eat three meals a day. One camp's newspaper thanked FDR "for lifting us out of the slums and dying farms . . . for saving the land while saving us." One boy wrote FDR: "I think, and so do the other fellows, that you are one regular guy."

Farmers also got help. They were paid by the government *not* to plant crops on part of their land. This cut down output and caused farm prices to rise.

To give the South a lift, the Tennessee Valley Authority was set up. It built dams and a huge electric generating system. It provided electricity for the first time to millions of people in seven states.

To help old people, the Social Security Act was passed. When workers retired at 65, they would get money each month. And unemployed workers would get money each week while they looked for jobs.

To help labor, the Wagner Act was passed. It gave government protection to the right of workers to join a union. Another act put an end to low pay for long hours of work. It set a minimum wage for certain jobs. To protect people with savings, the government insured bank savings up to \$10,000.

FDR told the people about his plans in radio talks. These were called "fireside chats." He had a fine speaking voice and millions listened to him. It seemed the President was right in the home with each family. People took heart again. Slowly the country fought its way out of the Depression to a new day.



Chapter 21

FIRST LADY

It was a tense moment. Eleanor Roosevelt, the President's wife, was visiting a meeting in an Alabama church. White people were seated on one side. Blacks were seated on the other. They were kept apart by law.

Mrs. Roosevelt had said many times that Negroes are citizens with equal rights. She had invited many Negroes to the White House. She had helped many to get good jobs and go to good schools. Some people hated her for this.

Now Mrs. Roosevelt wanted to sit among the blacks in the Alabama church. The chief of police said he would arrest her if she did. He also wanted to shame Mrs. Roosevelt. He planned to take her picture sitting among the whites. Then he could say she was not a true friend of the Negroes.

But Mrs. Roosevelt fooled the police chief. She asked for a folding chair. She placed it in the aisle between the Negroes and whites. As the police watched, she moved it close to the Negro section. Then she sat down. Back in the 1930's that was a brave act. Both Negroes and whites cheered her.

One of Eleanor Roosevelt's main goals in life was to help all the people she could. As America's First Lady (from 1933 to 1945), she did this in many ways.

In 1933 unemployed veterans of World War I set up a camp in Washington, D.C. They were angry. They said they would not leave until the government gave them help. President Roosevelt did not want to use force against them.

One day Mrs. Roosevelt visited the veterans' camp alone. It was made up of rough huts and tents. The ground was all muddy. Mrs. Roosevelt ate with the veterans. She listened to their sad stories. She sang the songs of World War I with them. The veterans cheered her to the skies. Then they agreed to go home peacefully. They knew that the President would do his best to help them, one way or another.

Mrs. Roosevelt visited the slums of Washington, D.C. She was upset by the things she saw. She said Congress must do something about these slums. Congress then passed a housing act. It helped to give some people of these and other slums decent homes.

Mrs. Roosevelt visited the Negro Home for Old People in Washington. It was falling apart. Rats were running all over. The old people got bad food. Mrs. Roosevelt told Congress, "We should be ashamed. It made me sick." Congress then voted to fix up the Home.

Mrs. Roosevelt worried about young people, too. In the Depression, millions were too poor to finish high school or go to college. Mrs. Roosevelt had a plan. It was to give students part-time work so they could stay in school. She told her husband about it. He said, "If you think it's the right thing to do for our young people, then it should be done." And it was. Millions of students were helped.

Mrs. Roosevelt wanted women to be treated as the equals of men. It upset her that the government hired women only as clerks and typists. "The government must set a good example for others," she said. President Roosevelt led the way. He made Frances Perkins his Secretary of Labor. She was the first woman ever to hold a post in the Cabinet.

Mrs. Roosevelt traveled thousands of miles a year to visit the poor. She visited poor farmers in the Dust Bowl. She went down into coal mines to see if miners were safe. She visited prisons, factories, orphan homes, schools, and hospitals. In World War II, she visited thousands of American soldiers overseas.

Eleanor Roosevelt still kept busy after President Roosevelt died in 1945. President Harry Truman sent her to the United Nations. There she worked hard for peace and the freedom of all people.

Nowadays few of Eleanor Roosevelt's actions sound all that great. Why the fuss? The fact is that, before Mrs. Roosevelt, the Presidents' wives were just hostesses. They took care of the social life at the White House. But Mrs. Roosevelt changed all that. She got into the action of the world she lived in. And she showed that the President's wife can get things done. She was a real force in politics — and was often disliked for it. But toward the end of Mrs. Roosevelt's life, even many of her bitter enemies respected her.

Eleanor Roosevelt died November 7, 1962. She was 78 years old. She was mourned by great leaders and plain people everywhere. They called her the "First Lady of the World."



FIORELLO

"I'm going to throw the crooks and bums out of City Hall. I'm going to make my city clean again. I'm going to see that New York does what it is supposed to do — serve the people. And this means *all* the people. No pregnant mother will go without medical care. No child will go without milk. No family will go without a roof. And I mean what I say!"

It was Fiorello LaGuardia, the Little Flower, speaking. He was running for mayor of New York City in 1933. New Yorkers were still upset by a big scandal in the old Tammany (Democratic) government. They liked LaGuardia because he promised to bring back honest government. It was also the middle of the Depression. Many people were out of work and hungry. LaGuardia's promises to help poor people made him even more popular.

LaGuardia had been a Republican Congressman. Now he was backed by a new reform party called the Fusion Party. He was running against the powerful Tammany machine. Reporters asked LaGuardia if he could beat Tammany running on a Fusion ticket. LaGuardia shot back, "I could beat those bums running on a *laundry* ticket!"

The Tammany machine put up a tough fight. It was also a dirty one. Tammany hoodlums broke up Fusion meetings. Fusion posters were torn down. Fusion speakers were shouted at. City workers were told they would be fired if they helped LaGuardia's campaign.

LaGuardia and his Fusion friends fought back in their own way. They sang "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" (This song came from a Walt Disney cartoon movie.) Tough Golden Gloves boxers from LaGuardia's home section battled Tammany hoodlums.

On election day, Tammany "stole" thousands of

votes. But LaGuardia won anyway. New Yorkers went wild with happiness. There were parades and dancing in the streets that night. The people had voted a new deal in New York City to match FDR's New Deal for the U.S.

Fiorello LaGuardia became one of New York City's greatest mayors. The people re-elected him twice. He wiped out hundreds of acres of slums. He replaced them with good, low-rent houses. He also built parks, playgrounds, beaches, parkways, hospitals, and schools. A hard worker, LaGuardia needed three secretaries to keep up with him. Yet he cut his own salary!

LaGuardia was full of life. He was short and pudgy, but he wore big, Western-style hats. He loved to chase after fire engines in his car. At a fire, he always wore a fireman's hat. He led police raids on gamblers. On a big construction job, he would operate the power shovel. He liked to lead bands, waving his arms about.

During a newspaper strike, LaGuardia read the comics to children over the radio. Reading *Dick Tracy*, he asked, "Why can't *our* detectives look like Dick Tracy?" Once some German Nazis in New York demanded police protection. LaGuardia sent over some policemen. They were all Jewish.

Fiorello LaGuardia was born in New York City, December 11, 1882. He became a lawyer and then went into politics. He was elected to Congress as a Republican in 1916. The next year he quit Congress to become a flier in World War I. At 35, he was old to be a flyer. But he won many medals and became a hero.

After the war, he went back to politics. He served in Congress from 1922 to 1932. The people of his district were mainly poor Italians and Jews. LaGuardia made speeches to them in Italian and Yiddish. (He spoke other languages, too.) In Congress he became known as a friend of the working man and the poor.

LaGuardia died in 1947. He was mourned not only by the people of New York, whom he served so well, but by people all over the world.

Chapter 23



“Okies.” The name was hissed at them at the California border. It sounded like a dirty word, and the newcomers were surprised.

They had come to California to find work. They had heard that the state was covered with grape vines, vegetable farms, and fruit trees. They had heard that the growers needed pickers to pick their crops. Pickers were needed for oranges, for strawberries, for grapes, for almost anything you could name. And picking meant pay. Not very much pay, but at least enough to live on. Without it, they would starve.

They had driven their old trucks and Tin Lizzies over 1,000 miles to escape the dust storms and their dried-out farms. They needed these jobs in California that they had come so far to get. But now they were told, “Okie, go back where you came from.”

The “Okies” were families from Oklahoma in the mid-1930’s. Many came from the other states of the Great Plains, but all were called “Okies.” The Great Plains stretch down from the Dakotas in the north to Texas in the south. Only 10 years before, these states had been the breadbasket of the nation. What had gone wrong?

During World War I, food prices shot up. To take

advantage of the high prices, farmers planted on lands that usually didn't get much rain. Ranchers let their cattle and sheep graze over more and more acres. As luck would have it, rainfall was a little heavier than usual. More and more grain grew, and so more and more cattle grazed. Prices stayed pretty high even after the war was over.

But the plowing and the grazing ripped off the sod (the top layer of grass that protects the soil). The farmers and ranchers never bothered to plant new grass on the places they had used. This kind of thing had been going on for years. But during the "good times" of high prices, it got much worse.

Then around 1925 prices began to go down again. In the early 1930's, rainfall went down, too. By the time FDR took office, there had been little or no rain on the Great Plains for a year and a half. The wells and water holes were drying up. The grain and grass turned brown. As the winds blew over the dry land, they picked up the soil in giant, dark clouds of dust. There was no sod to hold it down.

Crops were ruined. The farmers couldn't pay off the banks for the money they had borrowed for new equipment and more land during the good years. So banks began taking over the farms.

People kept saying that if you could hold out for a while, things would get better again. The rains would come back. But the rain didn't come back. The drought went on. It continued, year after year, all through the thirties. The land was becoming all powdery.

Dust storms were common in this dry area without trees. Usually a dust storm lasted a few hours. But the dust storms of the 1930's were something else. They lasted for days. Farmers had to go inside to get away from blowing dust and sand. They had to stuff rags into the openings and cracks of their houses.

Some days the dust got so bad it blotted out the sun, turning day into night. Dust and sand from the Great Plains were blown all the way to the eastern states. There

was a day when the dust of Nebraska partly blocked the sun in Massachusetts.

Sometimes a farmer found dust and sand piled up to his windows like snowdrifts. He couldn't plant in this dust. And if he did there was no rain to water his crop.

More and more farmers went broke and began leaving their homes. Between 1934 and 1939, some 350,000 families piled into 10-year-old trucks and 12-year-old autos. They headed West in strange, sad lines of old, battered cars and trucks, mattresses on top, pots and pans clanging on the sides, suitcases strapped to the back. To many of these migrants, California seemed like a promised land.

For most, California was not a promised land. It was a place where the whole family went into the fields — if there was work. If not too many pickers showed up, they might make 45 cents an hour. It was a place where they lived in the fields. Their houses were made of tin sheets or cardboard boxes. Water for cooking and drinking came from a nearby ditch.

When the picking of one crop was done, the "Okie" families would move on to the next. They traveled in their old trucks or cars, if they had not fallen apart yet. Or else they walked to the next job, if they could find one.

In 1937 the U.S. government took action. The Farm Security Agency — called FSA for short — was set up. The FSA tried to help the migrant workers and also the small farmers who had not left the Dust Bowl area. FSA money built new, cleaner and healthier migrant-worker camps. The FSA also bought up empty land and turned it into forests and pasture. FSA agents taught farmers to plant grass to hold down the soil, and trees and shrubs to hold back the wind.

The FSA did much to help the victims of the Dust Bowl. But the Depression was still on. The problems of the people who had lost their lands were never really solved. Then in 1940 war production opened thousands of new jobs. Soon the migrants were leaving the fields and going to the cities for work.

PART 5

THE WORLD OF SPORTS



Preface

A GOLDEN AGE

Roaring twenties, Depression thirties — it seemed as if the whole world had changed. America would never be the same again, people said.

But one thing about America and Americans didn't change. That was a love for sports. Good times or bad times, the world of sports went on. Today, when old-time sports-lovers look back on the past, some wonderful memories light up their eyes.

Was there ever a time when sports stars were greater than ever before — or ever since? Some older people will say, "Yes, that time was the 1920's." They call it the Golden Age of sports. The stars of those days, they say, were the greatest. Of course, there's no way to prove it. But one thing *is* sure — the stars of the twenties drew bigger crowds than ever before in our history. Americans wanted to relax, and watching sports was one way to do it. In those days there was no TV, so people went out to see the games.

Who were some of the great heroes of the day?

In baseball there were Babe Ruth and Rogers Hornsby, among many others. Ruth still holds the all-time record for home runs — 714. Hornsby set the record for batting in 1924. That year he hit .424 with the Cardinals.

In football there was "Red" Grange. Many people still think he was the best *running* back ever. "Red" rushed more than 3,600 yards in three years with Illinois. Later he turned pro and helped to build the pro game.

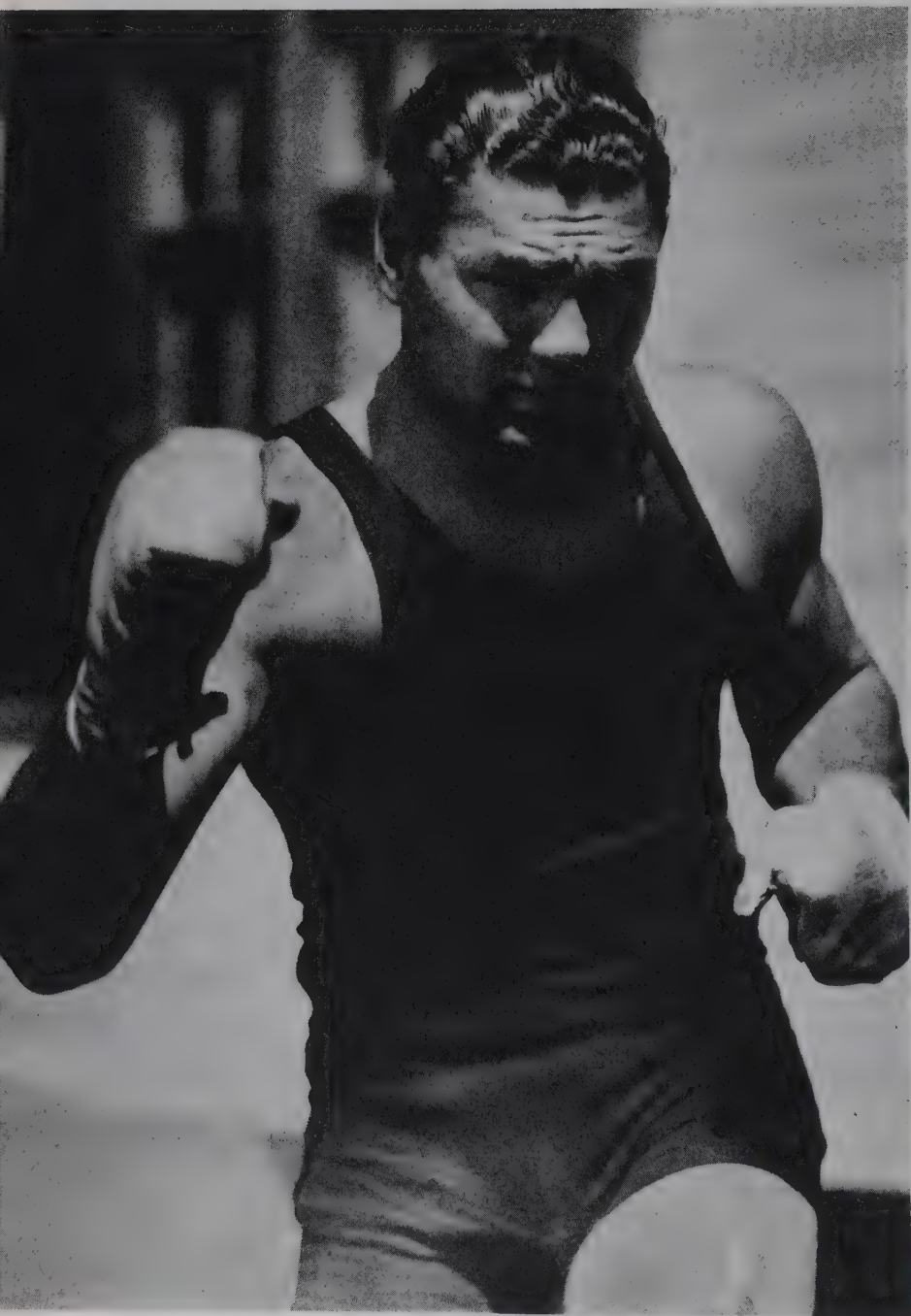
In boxing there was Jack Dempsey, the heavyweight champion. Dempsey fought like a tiger and often knocked out men 50 pounds heavier. Sportswriters in 1950 voted him the greatest fighter up to that time.

There were many other great sports stars in the 1920's: Bobby Jones of golf, "Big Bill" Tilden and Helen Wills of tennis, Johnny Weissmuller and Gertrude Ederle of swimming, and New York's original Celtics of basketball.

Then came the 1930's and the Depression. But sports and sports-lovers didn't fade away. Other great stars came along. Some of the greats of the 1930's were: Joe Louis, Joe DiMaggio, Jesse Owens, and Sammy Baugh. Fewer people could go to sports events in the thirties. That was because they didn't have much money to spare. But they listened to everything on the radio and they read about events in the papers. And they talked about sports. It helped to take their minds off their troubles.







JACK THE GIANT-KILLER

Sportswriters called it “the Battle of the Century.” It was the prize fight between Jack Dempsey and Luis Firpo. The date was September 14, 1923. The place was the Polo Grounds in New York.

Jack Dempsey was the heavyweight champion. He was small for a heavyweight, just a little over six feet tall and about 190 pounds. But he had already beaten much bigger men. Sportswriters called him “Jack the Giant-Killer.”

Luis Firpo was also a heavyweight. He was bigger than Dempsey. He weighed about 220 pounds. In Argentina, his homeland, he was a hero. Sportswriters called him “the Wild Bull of the Pampas.”

More than 80,000 fans jammed into the Polo Grounds that night. They couldn’t believe what they saw. Five seconds after the bell, Firpo knocked Dempsey down with a right. The crowd went crazy. One punch — and it looked like the champ was finished. But Dempsey got to his feet and held on. Moments later he was fighting like a tiger. He poured rights and lefts on the Wild Bull. Firpo went down. He got up at nine, and then was floored again. Then it was Firpo’s turn to knock Dempsey down. Dempsey got up and knocked Firpo down four more times. And the fight was less than two minutes old!

Then it happened. Firpo charged across the ring and caught Dempsey with a right. It knocked Dempsey

clear out of the ring! Dempsey went through the ropes, landing in the laps of the sportswriters. They helped push him back in the ring before the count of 10. Then Dempsey floored Firpo again before the round ended!

At the end of the round, Dempsey was in a daze. "What round was I knocked out in?" he asked his manager. "You just slipped," his manager said. "You're coming out for the second round."

In the second round, Dempsey went after Firpo again. He knocked him down twice. The second time Firpo was counted out. The whole fight had lasted only three minutes and 57 seconds. But there had been 11 knockdowns. And Jack Dempsey had proved he was a great champion.

Jack Dempsey was the most exciting fighter of his time. He was born June 24, 1895, in Manassa, Colorado. He was one of 11 children. For years the Dempsey family went all over the West by wagon. Jack's father worked at odd jobs. His mother took in washing. Jack dropped out of school after the eighth grade. At 16 he was on his own. He rode freight trains. He begged for work and food. He picked fruit and worked in mines. But what he really wanted to be was a boxer. So he took on fights whenever he had a chance. He trained hard until his body became tough. He weighed only 165 pounds, but he fought heavyweights. He knocked most of them out.

On July 4, 1919, Dempsey fought Jess Willard, the world champion. Willard was six feet, six inches tall. He weighed 250 pounds. Dempsey knocked him down seven times in the first round. In the third round, Willard's men threw in the towel. Dempsey was the new champion of the world.

Dempsey quit the ring in 1927 after losing a second time to Gene Tunney. But he was still a hero to millions of fans. To them he was the champion of champions. People from all over the world came to visit him, just to shake his hand. In 1950 sportswriters voted him the greatest fighter of the century.

THE BABE

He was the greatest home run hitter of all time. He was called the Babe, or the Bambino. His real name was George Herman Ruth.

The Babe didn't *look* like a ballplayer. The Babe *was* fat. And he was top heavy — he had skinny legs. One sportswriter said he had a belly like Santa Claus. Yet he could hit the ball a mile — and the fans loved him for it. The Babe didn't like to bunt or get a base on balls. He swung for the fences. When he missed, his body twisted up like a pretzel. Each time the Babe came to bat, the fans roared. They expected him to hit a home run.

In 1927 Babe set the record for home runs in a 154-game season. He did it on the next to the last day of the season. The date was September 30. The place was Yankee Stadium in New York City. The pitcher for the Washington Senators was Tom Zachary.

The Babe had already hit 59 home runs, tying his old record, set in 1921. Now Babe waited for the pitch, swinging his bat a little. Zachary's pitch came in. The Babe swung. *Click!* It was the special sound Babe Ruth made when he connected. The ball sailed far over the right-field fence. Seconds later the Babe came trotting around the bases. Happily he tipped his hat to the cheering fans. Sixty home runs in one season! It was a record that was not topped until the season was made longer.

Babe Ruth was born February 6, 1895, in Baltimore, Maryland. He came from a very poor family. As a boy, Babe "played hookey" and ran around in the streets. "I was," Ruth said, "a bad kid." When he was seven, his parents put him into St. Mary's Industrial



School. It was for orphans and “bad kids.” Babe lived there for the next 12 years.

At St. Mary’s, Brother Gilbert got the Babe interested in baseball. Soon Ruth was the pitching and batting star of his team. At 19 he was signed by the minor league Baltimore Orioles. “You mean you’ll *pay* me to play baseball?” Babe asked. “Sure,” said Jack Dunn, manager of the Orioles. “Six hundred dollars a year to start.”

When Ruth came to the Orioles, a coach said, “Here’s Jack Dunn’s newest babe.” After that, Ruth became known as “the Babe.” Soon he was sold to the Boston Red Sox of the American League. Ruth was a fine pitcher, winning more than 20 games a year. But by 1918 he was also playing the outfield. In 1919 he hit 29 home runs, more than anyone had ever hit before.

Then the Red Sox sold the Babe to the Yankees for \$100,000. The Yankees wanted Babe’s bat in the line-up every day. So Ruth gave up pitching completely and played only the outfield. In his first year with the Yankees, he hit 54 home runs. Ruth helped the Yankees win their first seven pennants. With Ruth, the Yankees became known as “Murderers’ Row.” And the new Yankee Stadium was called “the house that Ruth built.” Ruth’s salary climbed to \$80,000 a year — the highest in baseball. It was more than the President of the United States made.

Off the field, the Babe ate and drank like a giant. And he loved kids. He was never too busy to visit a sick boy in a hospital. He’d give the boy a bat and a baseball, which he signed. Then he’d promise to hit a home run that afternoon. Usually he did.

The Babe retired as a player in 1936. His greatest disappointment was that he never became manager of the Yankees. When he died of cancer in 1948, he left behind a magic name and a long list of records. His greatest record was hitting 714 major league home runs. In 1969 he was voted the greatest baseball player of all time.



AN OLYMPIC HERO

A huge crowd filled the stadium in Berlin, Germany. It was August 1936. The crowd had come to see the exciting Olympic games. Even Adolf Hitler, the Nazi German dictator, was there. Hitler had told the German people that they were “supermen.” All other people were inferior. Hitler especially looked down on the Negro athletes from the U.S. Two months before, the German boxer Max Schmeling had knocked out the great Joe Louis. Now Hitler was sure that German athletes would defeat more American champions.

The United States had sent 382 athletes to Berlin. Ten of them were Negroes. Among them was Jesse Owens, the greatest track and field star of his day. Owens didn’t feel “inferior,” no matter what Hitler’s Nazis said. He decided to show Hitler how wrong he was. He put on a show that the world would never forget. Here’s what he did:

Monday, August 3. Jesse won the 100-meter dash. He flashed across the finish line in 10.3 seconds. It was an Olympic record. Hitler was so angry he walked out of the stadium. He did not want to have to shake Owens’ hand.

Tuesday, August 4. Lutz Long, a German athlete, held the lead in the broad-jump event. He had jumped more than 25 feet, nine inches — a record. Then it was Owens’ turn. He made a tremendous leap. He cleared

more than 26 feet, five inches. It was a new Olympic record — and it topped Long's mark. A true sportsman, Long put his arm around Owens' shoulders. He did not care that Hitler was watching.

Wednesday, August 5. Against five great runners, Owens finished first in the 200-meter dash. His time was 20.7 seconds — another Olympic record.

Sunday, August 9. Owens was a member of the U.S. team that won the 400-meter relay race. The U.S. team set a new world record of 39.8 seconds.

In all, Owens won four Olympic gold medals. He was the hero of the 1936 Olympics — to all but Hitler and the Nazis. He was given a hero's welcome when he got back to the U.S.

Jesse Owens was born September 12, 1913. He was one of seven children of a poor Alabama tenant farmer. As a boy, Jesse worked in the cotton fields. When Jesse was 11, his family moved to Cleveland, Ohio. One day the track coach at Fairmount Junior High held tryouts for the track team. Jesse Owens beat the school's two champions in the 100-yard dash. His time was 10 seconds flat — a record for junior high schools. Coach Charles Riley knew he had a star.

Soon Jesse was setting high school records in the 100-yard dash, the 200-yard dash, and the broad jump. And he was doing it on an empty stomach. These were the Depression years, and Jesse's father was out of a job. Food was often scarce in his home. Jesse worked as a shoeshine boy to help his family.

After high school, Jesse attended Ohio State University. He had to work his way through college, running an elevator and pumping gas. At Ohio State, Owens became known as the "Buckeye Bullet." On May 25, 1935, Owens had one of his greatest days. Within 75 minutes, Owens smashed three world track and field records and tied a fourth. The next year, Owens became the hero of the 1936 Olympics.

In 1950 sportswriters voted Owens the greatest track and field star of the 20th century.

Chapter 27

THE BROWN BOMBER

Joe Louis—the “Brown Bomber”—was mad. In 1936 he was knocked out by Max Schmeling, the German fighter. That was bad enough. But now the Nazis were bragging about it. It was, they said, a victory for Germany and the “master race.” Schmeling, too, was beginning to sound like a Nazi. He called Louis “black fellow” and “stupid amateur.”

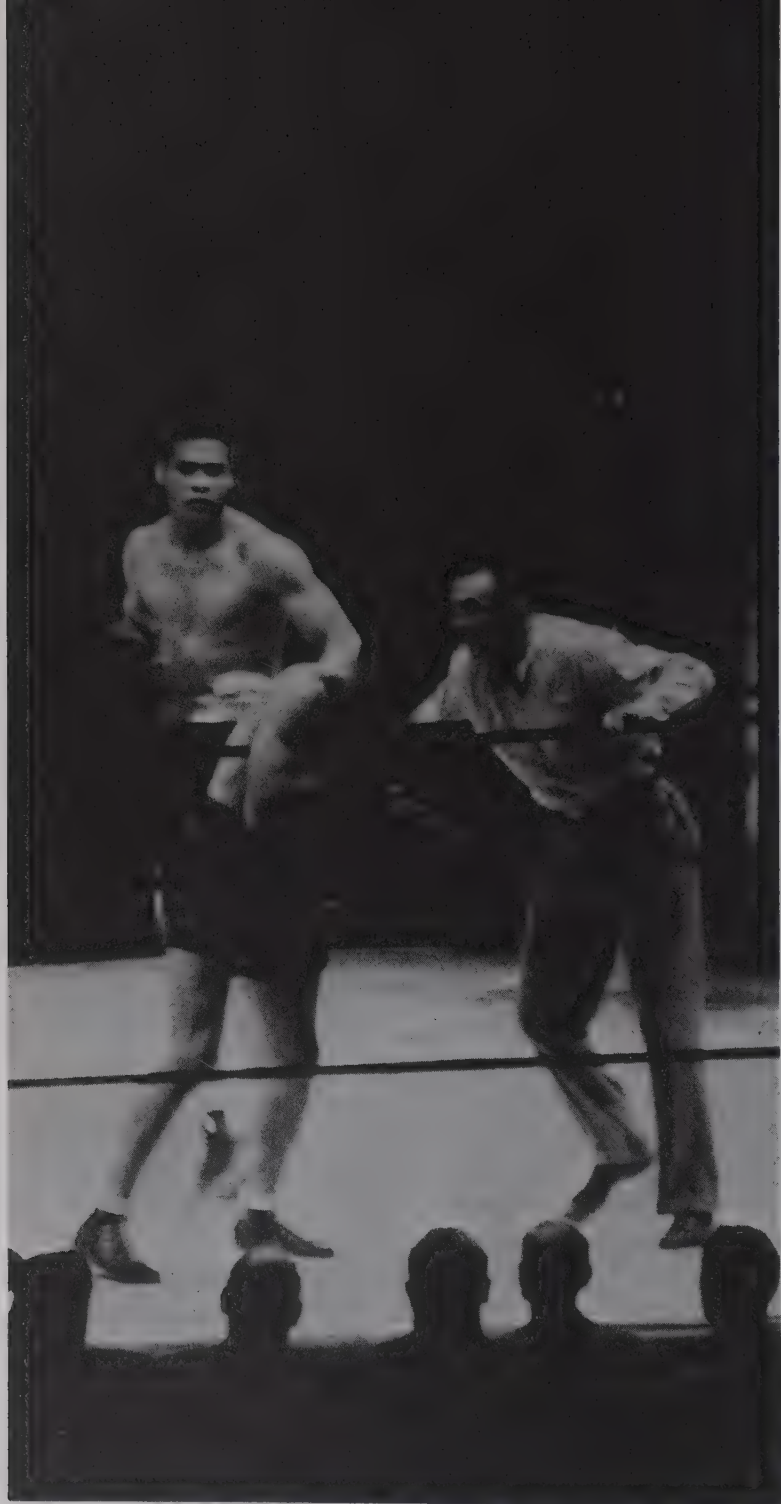
Louis couldn’t wait to get even. “Get me Schmeling,” he told his managers. “I want Schmeling.” Finally the fight was set for the night of June 22, 1938. Louis trained harder than he ever did before. His muscles were like steel springs. A reporter asked him how long the fight would last. Louis held up one finger. “One round,” he said.

More than 70,000 fans packed New York’s Yankee Stadium for the fight. Millions more listened to it on the radio. At the bell, Louis tore into Schmeling. Three lefts and a right drove Schmeling back into the ropes. Louis kept hammering away. Schmeling looked sick. He couldn’t move. His legs turned to jelly. Down he went for a count of three.

Schmeling got up and Louis swarmed over him again. A right and a left sent Schmeling down again. Schmeling got to his feet and Louis knocked him down a third time. Schmeling’s handlers threw a towel into the ring. (It was a sign they wanted to stop the fight.) The referee threw it back. Now Schmeling was hanging on the ropes, helpless. Then the referee stopped the fight. “If I hadn’t,” he said later, “Joe would have killed him.”

The “Brown Bomber” had gotten even in two minutes and four seconds of the first round!

Joe Louis Barrow (his real name) was born on May



13, 1914. His father was a poor Alabama tenant farmer. He died when Joe was four. Soon Joe was helping his mother, brothers, and sisters pick cotton. Joe's mother remarried and the family moved to Detroit. Joe was then 10 years old. He hadn't gone to school much. In Detroit he was put in a class with younger kids. Joe didn't like that.

When the Depression came, Joe's stepfather lost his job. Joe had to go to work after school. He delivered ice. He would carry a 50-pound block of ice up four flights of stairs. Then another — and another. It was hard work, but it made Joe big and strong.

When Joe was 18, he heard that an amateur fight club paid fighters with food. Joe had hungry brothers and sisters at home, so he signed up for a fight. He was knocked down six times in the first two rounds. He went home aching and swore never to box again. He gave his mother the \$7 worth of food he got. A little later he quit school and took a factory job.

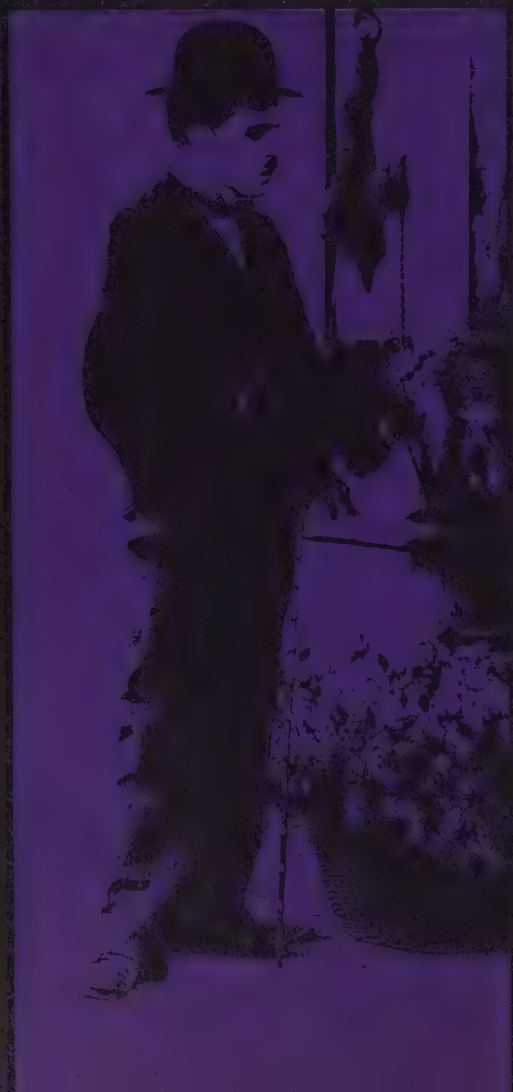
Soon Joe met a professional boxer. He gave Joe some lessons and talked him into entering the Golden Gloves. In 1934 Joe won the Golden Gloves light-heavyweight title. Then he became a pro. He won his first three pro fights by knockouts. Sportswriters began calling him the "Brown Bomber." He became the golden boy of boxing.

Joe came to New York and knocked out the giant Primo Carnera. Soon he was earning \$250,000 a fight. In 1937 he knocked out Jim Braddock and won the heavyweight title. He kept the title for 12 years. He defended it 25 times, more than any other heavyweight champion in history. He won 20 of his title fights by knockouts.

Boxing was good to Louis, and Louis was good for boxing. He had millions of fans, black and white. Louis often spoke of black Americans as "my people," and to them he was a special hero. "If I ever let my people down," he once said, "I wanna die." Joe never let them down once.

PART 6

THE WORLD OF MAKE-BELIEVE



Preface

ESCAPE FROM HARD TIMES

The Depression years were very hard on Americans. For millions of people, life was nothing but hard work and low pay. It was a day-to-day struggle to make ends meet. But there were some ways — ways that didn't cost much — to “escape” from hard times.

One way was to go to the movies. The movies of the 1930's were a kind of dream world. Many big-city movie theaters looked like palaces. They had plush seats and imitation gold and fancy plaster all over the walls. Sometimes they had ceilings two or three stories high. People sat in these big, dark theaters and looked up at a world of make-believe on the silver screen. What did they see? They saw movies about people who were very rich, beautiful, charming, or brave. They saw movies about people they had never met — and never would meet — in real life.

Americans were poor, but they usually could afford 15 cents to go to the movies and forget their troubles. During the 1930's, about *100 million people bought tickets to the movies every week*. (That is about twice as many as today.) The movies boomed. There were more great “stars” than ever before — or ever since. You can still see their movies on TV today — Bette Davis, James Cagney, Joan Crawford, Errol Flynn, and dozens more.

The movies of the 1930's had child stars, monster stars, musical stars, and glamour (beauty) stars. They also had “tough-guy” stars who acted in gangster movies. Gangster movies were popular in the thirties. Americans were hearing more and more about “public enemies” wanted by the FBI. Gangster movies were often about real public enemies.

It seemed as if Americans in the 1930's went to the movies every time they had 15 cents to spend. But they spent even more time listening to the radio. Radio was better than the movies in one way — it was free.



The first "moving pictures" were shown to a one-at-a-time audience in coin machines. They were mostly in arcades and amusement parks. The "movie theater," with a large screen, came later.





Early movies were silent and had simple plots. Most of them were comedies, with pie-throwing a favorite sport. Longer and more complex plots came when sound was added. The first full-length "talkie" was *The Jazz Singer* of 1927. It starred Al Jolson (below).





American audiences wanted romance in their movies, and romance was what they got. Among men's favorite stars were Greta Garbo (left), Marlene Dietrich (below), and Clara Bow (in swim suit). The most famous romantic hero among women movie watchers was the dashing Rudolph Valentino (right).







Other stars were less romantic but no less popular. Harold Lloyd (left) lived through many a comic terror. Charlie Chaplin (below) played sad little funny men. Child star Shirley Temple sang and danced (right, with black dancer Bill Robinson). Singer Judy Garland won movie fame in her early teens (lower right, in *The Wizard of Oz*).







Chapter 28

THOSE WONDERFUL MOVIE STARS

Movie fans could hardly believe it. There was Al Jolson on the screen talking and singing — and they could *hear* him! The movie was *The Jazz Singer*. It was the first movie to have sound. The year was 1927. Soon all movies had sound. They were called “talkies.”

Many stars of the old, silent movies lost their jobs. Their voices were not good enough for “talkies.” But many new stars took their places in the 1930’s. Handsome cowboy star Gary Cooper was one of them. Child stars like Shirley Temple, Mickey Rooney, and Judy Garland were others.

Gary Cooper. Some people thought that Gary Cooper was a real cowboy. He wasn’t. But he had learned to ride and rope on his father’s ranch in Montana. Cooper wanted to become a cartoonist. To earn eating money, he took a job as a stunt rider in Hollywood. He had many small parts in “horse operas” — Westerns. Later he became a star and a fine actor. Cooper was the public’s ideal of “a natural American.” In his pictures, he was shy, gentle, but strong. He was equally good as a Western law man or in a soldier’s uniform. He won Oscars for *Sergeant York* (1941) and *High Noon* (1952). Cooper died of cancer in 1961.

Judy Garland. As a child star, Judy Garland won a special Oscar for *The Wizard of Oz*. In it, she sang “Somewhere over the Rainbow.” It became her theme song. Judy was born in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Her real name was Frances Gumm. Her mother wanted to make her a movie star. First there were many years in small-town vaudeville theaters. At 12 Judy won a

movie contract. Her warm, rich voice made people forget her plain looks and figure. Before long Judy teamed up with another child actor, Mickey Rooney. Together they were called "the two most popular movie stars in the world." When Judy died in 1969, thousands of people felt a sense of loss.

Mickey Rooney. Mickey was the son of vaudeville actors. His real name was Joseph Yule III. At the age of three, he was already on the stage. As a boy, Mickey made dozens of *Mickey McGuire* short films. Then he began to star as *Andy Hardy*, an all-American boy. Mickey was short — five feet, three inches — but full of pep. Soon the Hardys were the most famous movie family in America. Today Mickey is often a guest star on TV shows.

Shirley Temple. Shirley Temple became a movie star at the age of five. Her dimples and golden curls were soon famous all over the world. Shirley's movies made millions of dollars at the box office. And Shirley earned \$2,500 a week. People loved to hear her sing "The Good Ship Lollipop" and "At the Codfish Ball." President Roosevelt praised her for "bringing us through the Depression with a smile." Shirley's popularity began to fade when she grew up. Today she is a housewife and mother, and active in politics. In 1967 she ran for Congress on the Republican ticket in California. She lost. In 1969 President Nixon appointed her to serve as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations.

Bill Robinson. Bill "Bojangles" Robinson was the most brilliant tap dancer of his day. The grandson of a slave, he earned \$3,000 a week at the peak of his career. Bill appeared with Shirley Temple in several pictures. In *The Littlest Rebel*, he taught Shirley a charming sidewalk dance. In *The Little Colonel*, they did a dance on a staircase that "wowed" audiences. But in those days black men always played the parts of slaves and faithful servants — or else comedy parts. Bill Robinson died in 1949 before it was possible for a black actor to take a really "top star" part.

THE “MEN FROM MARS”

It was the most famous radio broadcast of all time. It scared millions of Americans out of their wits. They were sure the United States was being invaded by men from Mars. They believed that Martians were killing everyone with ray guns and poison gas. Actually it was only a radio show. But most people thought it was the real thing. Here's how it happened:

It was Sunday evening, October 30, 1938 — before the days of TV. Millions of people were at home listening to the radio. The Mercury Theater of the Air, a CBS radio program, was about to begin. Its show that night was based on the book, *The War of the Worlds*. This book, by H.G. Wells, is science fiction. It tells how Martians invade Earth and destroy its people.

The Mercury Theater, headed by Orson Welles, wanted this show to sound real and up-to-the-minute. So it decided to present *The War of the Worlds* as a news broadcast. The show began with dance music and weather reports — an average radio show. But soon the music was stopped by “special news bulletins.” The first bulletin reported a “series of great explosions on the planet Mars.” The next one said that “a meteor had landed near Princeton, New Jersey, killing 1,500 persons.” Moments later there was a “correction.” It wasn't a meteor but “a huge metal object filled with Martians,” the announcer said. “They are armed with death rays to kill everyone on Earth. People are



dropping dead, killed instantly by the deadly Martian rays." Newark and New York were reported flooded with poison gas. Soon the "Secretary of the Interior" came on the air. He said the situation was very serious, but he asked people to stay calm and trust in God.

Within minutes, people all over the U.S. were in a panic. Most had not heard the start of the program which said: "This is a radio play based on the novel, *The War of the Worlds*." The reason was that most people were listening to the "Charlie McCarthy Show." During a dull spot in that show, they began turning their radio dials. Then they heard the "special news bulletins" — and thought they were real! Here are some of the things that happened:

On one street in Newark, New Jersey, 20 families rushed out of their homes. They had wet towels over their heads to protect them from "poison gas."

Police stations and newspaper offices were flooded with calls. "Shall I close my windows?" people asked. "Have the police any extra gas masks?"

In New York hundreds of people left their homes to flee West. Bus stations were mobbed.

In Providence, Rhode Island, people called the electric company to turn off all the lights. They hoped to save their city from the Martians by "blacking out."

In Minneapolis, Minnesota, a woman ran into her church crying, "This is the end of the world! I just heard it on the radio."

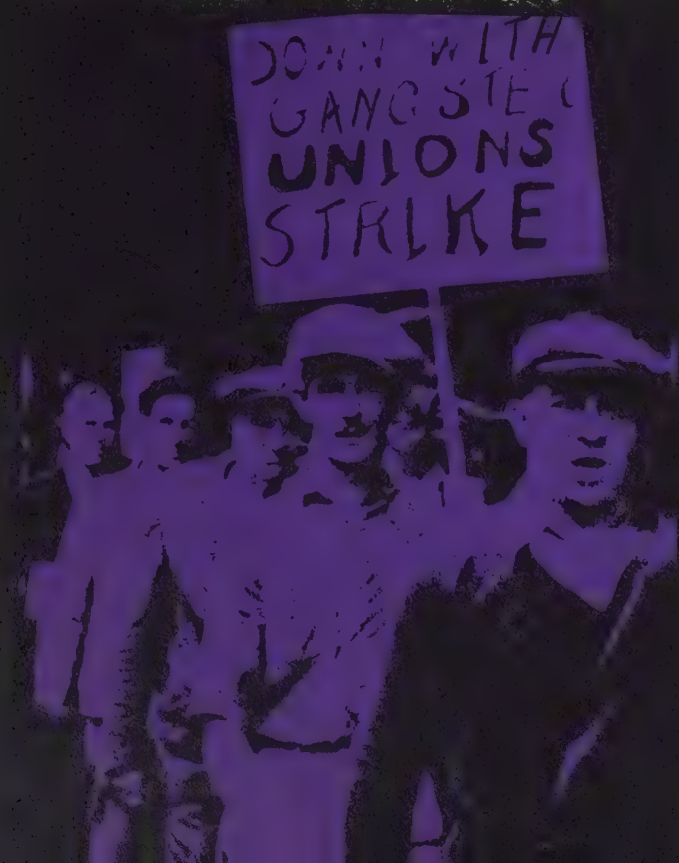
In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a man found his wife with a bottle of poison in her hand. "I'd rather die this way than by men from Mars," she screamed.

In many places, people gathered in churches and prayed. In one college, girls wept in each others' arms.

Why were so many people fooled by this broadcast? In 1938 Europe was getting close to war. Radio was giving a lot of time to broadcasting the news. The "Men from Mars" program sounded just like these news broadcasts. It's easy to see why people thought it was "the real thing."

PART 7

WAKE OF DEPRESSION, SHADOW OF WAR



A MIXED TIME

What was it like during the *second* half of the 1930's? Looking back, no one thing about this time stands out. It wasn't like the 1920's. They were really wild. Those were the "roaring twenties." People did a lot of crazy things. Most people felt that peace and good times were here to stay. Of course the farmers and the poor in the city ghettos didn't think so. But on the whole, Americans who remember the twenties say: "It was a great time to be alive. We had a lot of fun in those days."

When the stock market crashed in the fall of 1929, the spirit of the twenties came to an end. Today when people think of the early 1930's they think of one thing — the Depression. They remember Roosevelt and the New Deal and how hard everybody tried to get us out of it. From 1929 to 1934, millions of Americans lived "hand to mouth." Some days they wondered where the next meal was coming from.

The Depression was still going on in 1935. But it didn't seem so bad by then. People were working very hard but not making much. Lots of people were still out of work. But it seemed that the big action was in Europe. Germany and Italy had been taken over by dictators. They seemed to be getting ready for war.

Did Americans know that a war was coming? Were people worried about that? It's hard to answer that question. Americans weren't thinking so much about Europe as they do now.

There was a lot of news in the papers about Hitler and the Nazis. The radio newscasters told how Hitler's Germany was taking over smaller countries — countries like Austria and Czechoslovakia. Nazi Germany was getting stronger and stronger, and nobody was stepping in to stop it.

Italy had become warlike, too. But other big countries — like Britain and France — didn't do anything about it. Italy marched an army into Ethiopia and took over the country. The League of Nations argued about it, but finally the League did nothing. Many people were shocked because the League wouldn't do anything. Of course Americans couldn't say much. The United States wasn't even a member of the League.

Weren't people afraid of war? Here in America people weren't thinking much about it. People in Europe were worried. They were scared of war. But most Americans didn't pay any attention. Instead they were thinking more about jobs and wages and labor unions and strikes.

All in all, the second half of the thirties was a mixed time. The U.S. was still in the Depression, but things were also moving closer and closer to World War II. Some say we were right in the shadow of the war, only hardly anyone knew it.

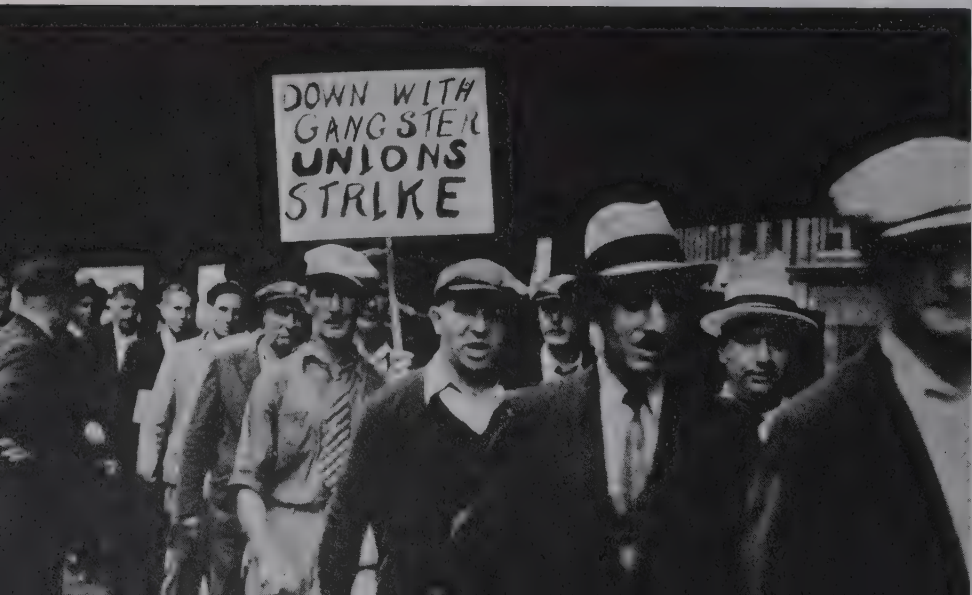
The National Guard had to be called out to block striking miners from the entrance to an Ohio coal field in 1932. Three strikers had been shot here when they attacked troops a few days before.



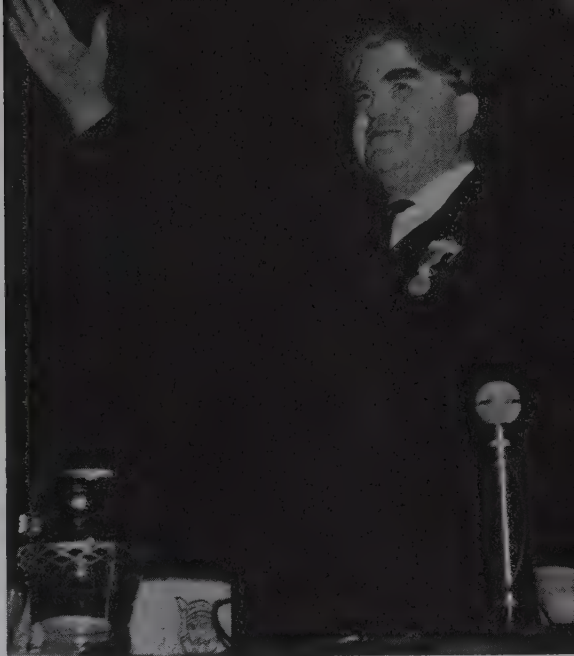
Danger
Keep Out
This Road Under
Rifle and Machine
Gun Fire

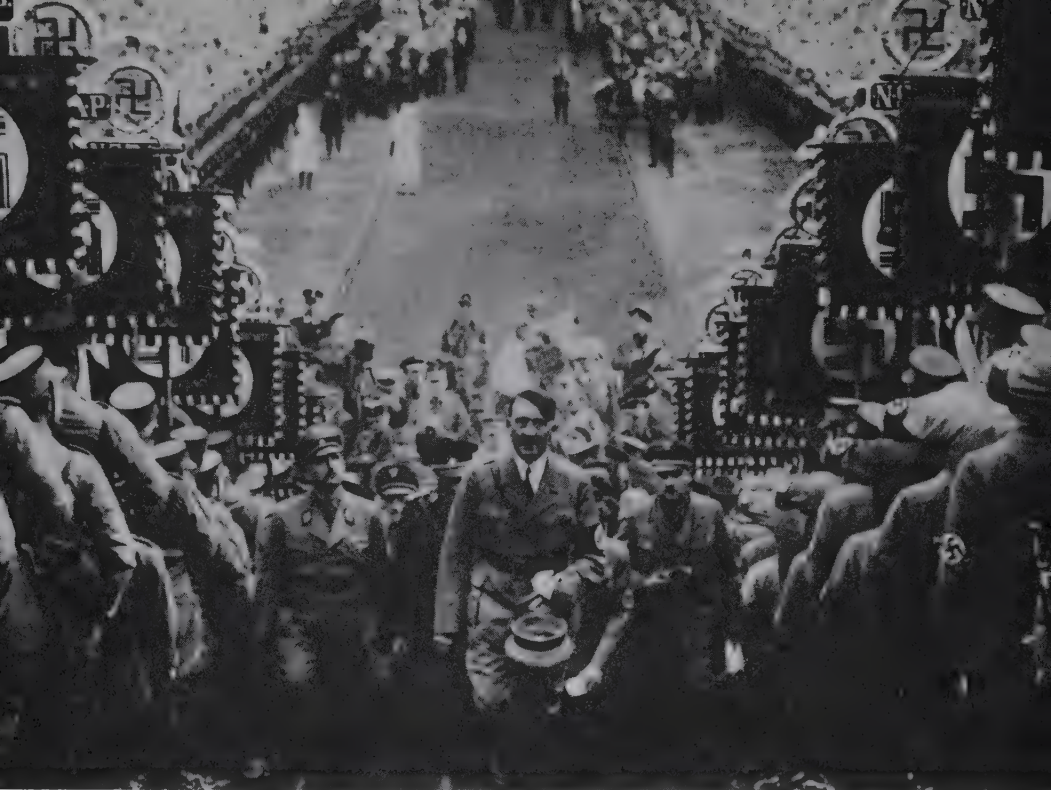
**SHERIFF'S
PROCLAMATION**

Maurice Wooster,



The thirties was a time of turmoil in many industries. Strikes were common. So was violence — either between police and workers or between union and nonunion workers. One of the most argued-about labor leaders was John L. Lewis (right).



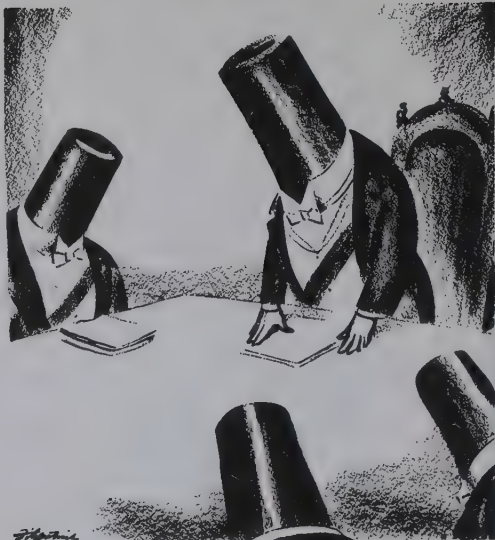
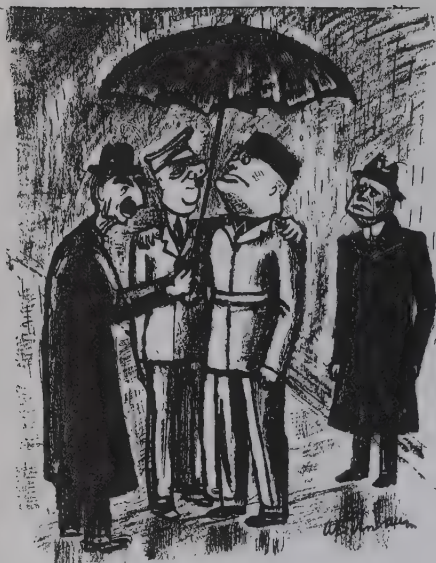




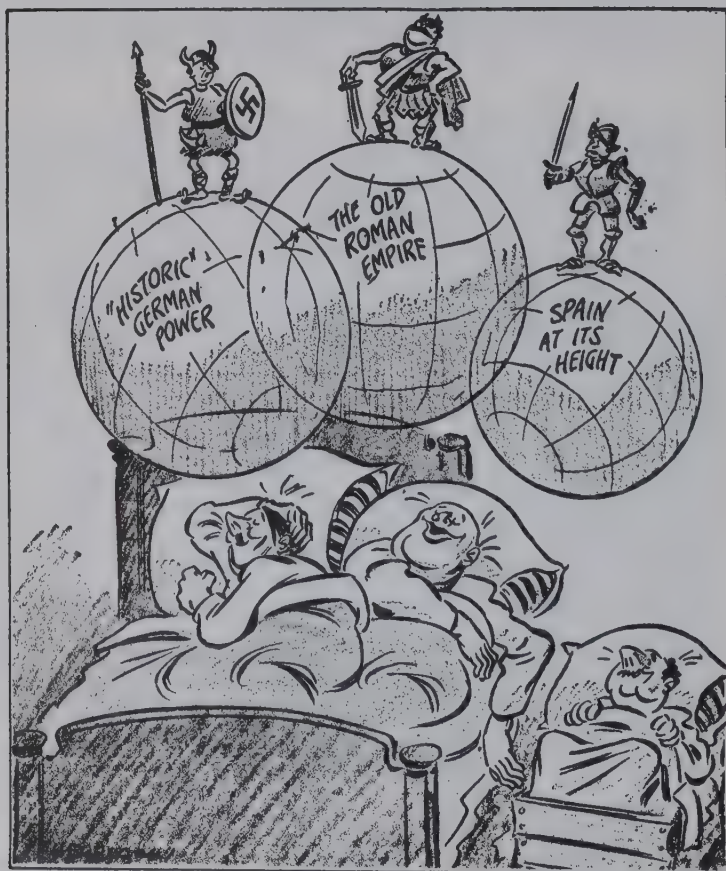
During the 1930's dictators Adolf Hitler in Germany (upper left) and Benito Mussolini in Italy (lower left) were headline news in Europe. Japan was at war with China (above, Emperor Hirohito at a military review) and a civil war raged in Spain (below). But few Americans took much notice. Most of them believed that the U.S. could shut itself off from troubles in the rest of the world.



"FELLOW DIPLOMATS—"



OVERLAPPING DREAMS





In 1938 Britain's Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain (with umbrella) "sold out" Czechoslovakia (standing in the rain) to Hitler and Mussolini. After that, the outlook for peace in Europe seemed gloomy. Political cartoons showed cannons taking the place of diplomats, while dictators dreamed of bringing back past glories through military conquest.

Chapter 30



A short, thin man stepped up to the microphones. His dark, deep-set eyes looked out at the people in the hall. In his hand he held some notes for the speech.

This man didn't wear a suit and tie like most other men in the hall. Instead, he wore a long black cloak over a plain white shirt and pants. There was something else different about him, too. It was his quiet pride and power.

Some newspaper reporters from Italy shouted insults at him. He paid no attention. He acted as if they were not even there. The rest of the hall was quiet, waiting to hear him speak.

The time: June 1936.

The place: the Assembly of the League of Nations, at Geneva, Switzerland.

The man: Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia.

The emperor had come to the League, he said, to ask for help. Ethiopia, his country, needed help. The most ancient kingdom in Africa, one of the oldest countries in the world, had been taken over by the Italians. Italy, under its dictator Benito Mussolini, had attacked Ethiopia the year before. And now, in 1936, Ethiopia was defeated. The emperor himself had fled. He was a ruler without a country. First he had fled to Jerusalem. Then he went to London. Now he was in Geneva to ask the world for help, for justice.

The emperor brought to the League an old, old

story. It was a case of might over right. A strong nation — Italy — had taken over a weak nation — Ethiopia — by armed force. It was the very kind of attack that the League had been set up to prevent. The question was, Would the League do anything. Would the peace-loving nations of the world act to keep one nation from attacking another? Would the nations of the League really listen to Haile Selassie?

The emperor said, "This is not just a case of Italian aggression [attack] against Ethiopia. It is the very existence of the League of Nations. . . . It is international morality that is at stake."

As he stepped down from the platform, the emperor added: "It is us today. It will be you tomorrow."

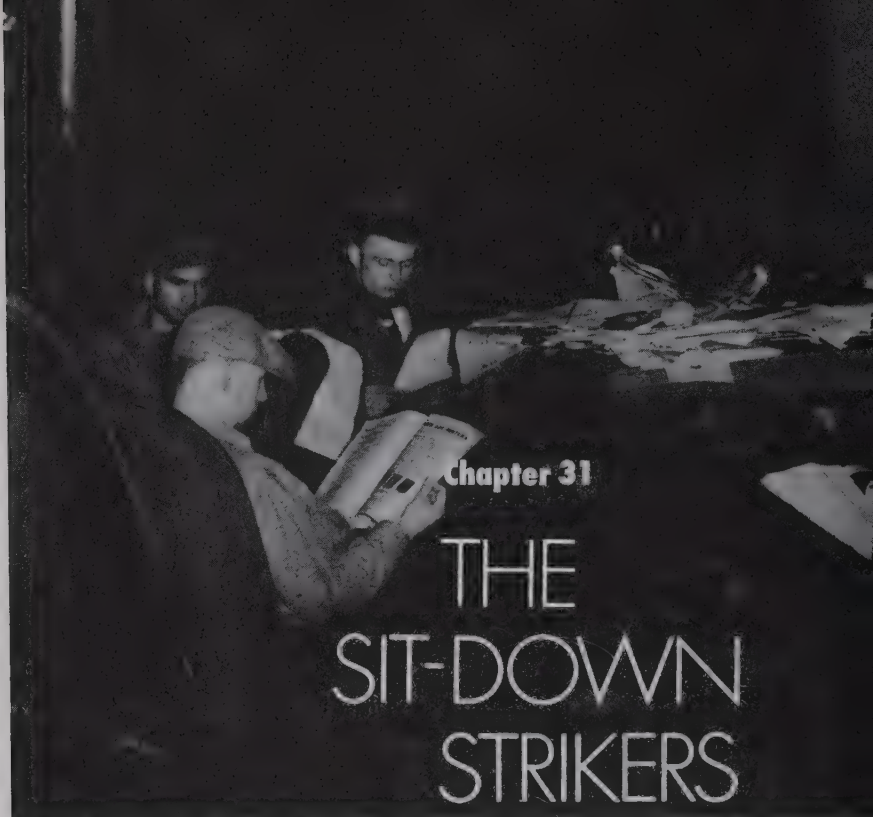
The emperor was right. Those last words he spoke are remembered to this day. People all over the world wish that the League had listened to his speech.

Why? Because Haile Selassie of Ethiopia gave them a look at the future. He told the members of the League what would happen in World War II. That was started because strong nations like Germany, Italy, and Japan thought they could take over smaller or weaker nations — and get away with it.

The emperor never got the League to take direct action against Italy. The peace-loving nations did a lot of talking. But in the end they would not help Ethiopia. They showed that the League had no power; in fact, the League of Nations was as good as dead from that time on.

But the emperor's speech put the spotlight on a proud man and a proud country. Italy and Nazi Germany kept on acting as if no nation would dare to challenge them, and the world drifted closer to war. Then people remembered the emperor more and more.

Today many people say that Haile Selassie is one of the great world leaders of this century. They believe he is one of the best spokesmen for the right of smaller nations to live in peace. And they remember Ethiopia for putting up a brave struggle to defend that right.



Chapter 31

THE SIT-DOWN STRIKERS

When they tie the can to a union man,
 Sit down! Sit down!
When the speed-up comes, just twiddle your thumbs,
 Sit down! Sit down!
When the bosses won't talk, don't take a walk,
 Sit down! Sit down!

This is a song that thousands of workers were singing in 1937. They were taking part in a new kind of strike — the sit-down. Usually workers walked out of a factory to go on strike. But these workers would *not* leave the factories when they went on strike. Instead, they just sat down at their work benches. They stayed inside the factories until the strikes were settled. That way strikebreakers could not be brought in to take their jobs. Sit-down strikes made big headlines in



the 1930's. Here is the story of one of the largest and most famous sit-down strikes in the history of the American labor movement:

Workers at the General Motors factories in Flint, Michigan, were angry. They earned only about \$1,000 a year. And there was a speed-up on the assembly line. Workers had to do their jobs very quickly. It put them under a great strain. "That line takes your guts out," the workers said.

Soon the workers began to join a new union, the United Automobile Workers (CIO). But officers of General Motors would not meet with the union. In January 1937, the union called a strike. This strike was something new. The workers just put away their tools and sat down.

At night they slept on the floors of new cars. Food was passed to them through the factory windows. The

workers kept good order. They had their own "police-men" inside. These men carefully guarded the company's property. No drinking was allowed. Even smoking was cut down.

General Motors officers said the workers had no right to stay on company property. The union officers said, "What more sacred right is there than the right of a man to his job? This means the right to support his family and to feed his children."

General Motors shut off the heat in its factories. It was winter, and the men were cold. But they wouldn't leave. Police tried to rush into one factory. Workers drove them back with flying soda bottles, coffee mugs, iron bolts, and door hinges. The police came back with tear gas bombs. The workers drove them back again by turning fire hoses on them.

The strike dragged on for weeks. Finally a court ordered the strikers to leave the factories. They had to get out by three o'clock on February 3. The National Guard was called in to back up the court order. But the workers said they would not leave. Then Michigan's Governor Frank Murphy ordered General Motors and the union to hold peace talks. Meanwhile the workers expected another attack. Outside the factories, thousands of union workers and relatives were ready to help fight it off. There were many women among them.

Three o'clock — zero hour — came on February 3. But there was no battle. Governor Murphy would not order the National Guard to attack. He did not want any blood spilled. President Roosevelt also asked for a peaceful end to the strike. A week later, the end came. General Motors agreed to bargain with the leaders of the United Automobile Workers. The company also agreed in advance to make changes in the assembly line.

This was a big victory for the auto union. But was the strike really necessary? The Wagner Act of 1935 had already said it was the workers' right to have union leaders represent them — and that companies had to recognize these leaders at the bargaining table.

THE “KINGFISH”

Some people said he wanted to become dictator of the United States. He was already dictator of his own state, Louisiana. And he often bragged he would be President. He even wrote a book about it. It was called *My First Days in the White House*. But his dreams were ended on September 8, 1935. That day a young doctor shot him. Hours later Huey Long, Louisiana's governor — and dictator — was dead. The shooting shocked people all over the United States.

Huey Long was born in a log cabin in Louisiana. The date was August 30, 1893. His family was poor. When he was a teenager, young Long became a traveling salesman, selling cooking oil to farmers. At 21 Long entered Tulane University in New Orleans to study law. He finished his law course in less than one year. Usually it takes three years.

When Huey Long went into politics, he knew how to win votes. He was a good speaker. And he knew what the poor people of his state wanted. In his speeches he lashed out at the rich companies and banks. He promised the poor farmers to build roads, schools, and hospitals. The farmers were all for him.

At 35 Long was elected governor of Louisiana. He kept his promises to the poor. Then in 1932 he was elected to the U.S. Senate but for two years he kept right on being governor, too. Now Long came out with an even bigger plan to help the poor. It was called the “Share the Wealth” plan. The idea was this:



Money would be taken away from the very rich by taxes. This money would then be given to the poor. No man would have to live on less than \$2,000 a year. Every man would get \$6,000 to buy a home and land. He would also get money in his old age, a radio, and a car. He would be able to buy food at low prices. Education would be free for everyone through college.

America was in the middle of the Depression. Many people were poor and out of work. They liked Long's

ideas. Soon there were "Share the Wealth" clubs all over Louisiana and other states. They wanted Long for President.

"Every man a king, but no man wears a crown," Huey Long said. No man — except Huey Long. In his own state, Long made himself dictator. He called himself "the Kingfish." He controlled the legislature and the courts. When he went to the Senate, he kept right on controlling things in Louisiana, even the new governor.

Huey Long bragged he could buy the votes of the state legislature. He could control elections. He could call out the militia whenever he wished. He had a secret police force. His enemies could be arrested and sent to jail. Long controlled all the state's police, fire chiefs, and school teachers. If a man wanted a civil service job, he had to vote for Long. If a newspaper wanted state printing business, it had to support Long.

Long was becoming very powerful. Even President Roosevelt worried about him. Long was out to beat Roosevelt for President. "Nobody can stop me," he said.

Long made many friends, especially among the poor. But he also made enemies. One of them was a young doctor named Carl Austin Weiss. Dr. Weiss had a grudge against Long. Weiss's father-in-law, an enemy of Long, was a judge. Long had taken away the judge's job. He had also fired two of the judge's daughters, who were teachers. He had also insulted the judge's family.

On September 8, 1935, Dr. Weiss walked up to Long in the state capitol building. He drew a small pistol and fired. Long's bodyguards fired back and killed Dr. Weiss instantly. Long died 30 hours later.

Huey Long was buried at the state capitol building under a big monument. More than 150,000 people came to the funeral. Many people said he was a great man who had helped the poor. But others said power was his god.



PEACE FOR OUR TIME

England. It was September 30, 1938. A huge crowd had gathered at London's big airport. They were waiting for a plane from Munich, Germany. As the plane slowed down to a stop, the crowd began to cheer loudly.

The door of the plane opened. There stood Neville Chamberlain, the British prime minister. In his hand was a piece of paper. He held it up for the crowd to see. More cheers went up. Then the prime minister stepped up to some microphones. "I think that it is peace for our time!" he said.

More cheers: "Good old Neville!"

France. Another crowd had gathered at an airport in Paris. When the plane came in, the Parisians rushed up to it even before it had stopped. Then Edouard (Edward) Daladier, the French premier, appeared. Crowds began dancing and cheering.

Daladier turned to a man at his side. "The fools," he said. "They don't know what they are cheering."

Czechoslovakia. There were crowds in the cities of Czechoslovakia, too, that day. These crowds were not cheering. Some people had tears running down their faces. September 30, 1938 was a sad day for the people of Czechoslovakia, especially for the country's Jewish citizens.

Why were the crowds in London and Paris so happy? They believed that their leaders had saved them from a war with Nazi Germany. They thought Chamberlain and Daladier had made a "deal" with Adolf Hitler. It wasn't just a deal. It was a bargain, so they thought.

The price of this "bargain" was some land that belonged to Czechoslovakia. It was called the *Sudetenland*. Hitler had wanted this land for a long time. He gave many warlike speeches about it at Nazi party meetings in Germany. "The people of the Sudetenland are Germans!" he screamed. "The Sudetenland must be turned over to Germany!" And if it wasn't, he warned, Germany would go to war for it.

By summer of 1938, people all over Europe were sure that a war would break out any moment. People were very scared.

The British and the French wanted to prevent war. So on September 29, 1938, Chamberlain and Daladier flew to Munich, Germany. They had a meeting with Hitler. All Europe held its breath for the outcome. Benito Mussolini, the Italian dictator, also went to Munich. He was Hitler's ally, and he backed everything Hitler said.

What Hitler said was, If you give the Sudetenland to Germany, there will be no war. Chamberlain and Daladier argued for hours. Finally they gave in. Early in the morning of September 30, they agreed to let Hitler take over the Sudetenland. Now Czechoslovakia was doomed. Without the Sudetenland, the Czechs could not defend their country.

There was cheering in London and Paris. People thought that peace had been saved.

The price of peace is not too high, Englishmen and Frenchmen said. Besides, they said, we are not ready for war. We are still in the Depression. We can't afford a big army and air force. We could not go to war against Hitler now, even if we wanted to.

While the English and French cheered, the Czechs

and Slovaks said the price *is much too high*. To keep Hitler quiet, you have paid with our freedom. Because we are a small nation, you have sold us down the river. You will see how wrong you were.

It turned out the Czechs and Slovaks were right. The English and the French were wrong. In a few months, German armies marched in and took over the rest of the country — except for the part that went to Hungary. And another piece that went to Poland.

By that time, Hitler was looking for more land. Germany was more powerful than ever. The leaders of France and Britain had made a terrible mistake. World War II was the proof of it.



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